

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



December 1987

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THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

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Prince Charles: heir aberrant? 48



The priest's tale 42



Land of dreams 54

COVER STORY

ALL TINSEL AND NO TALENT Nicholas de Jongh deplores the commercialism of London's theatres 34

MAIN FEATURES

CRYING ALL THE WAY FROM THE BANK Geraldine Bedell on how bankers and brokers are coping with the sack 38

THE PRIEST'S TALE Henry Porter visits an English *abbé* in his remote Normandy parish 42

THE PRINCE OF WALES Enoch Powell discusses the heir apparent's increasingly difficult role 48

MARINA WARNER John Graham profiles the blue-stockings beauty, now a Getty scholar 52

AUSTRALIA 200 YEARS ON Stephen Pile goes Down Under and explodes the Crocodile Dundee myth 54

MICHAEL DUKAKIS FOR PRESIDENT Edward Pearce assesses the chances of a new US Democratic front-runner 60

DEPARTMENTS

RESTAURANTS Kingsley Amis at the Caprice 67

FOOD AND WINE Matthew Fort finds inspiration for Boxing Day fare 68

REVIEWS George Perry on *The Dead*; Margaret Davies on a new Glyndebourne opera; J. C. Trewin on *Girlfriends* 70

BOOKS Louis Heren on *The Korean War*; Ian Stewart on fiction; a selection of Christmas reading 72

REGULAR FEATURES

EDITOR'S LETTER 7

THE MONTH Headline stories by Simon Horsford 12

HIGHLIGHTS Alan Rusbridger on London; Tom Fort on Peter de Savary; Mark Edwards on an agent for the dead 19

LISTINGS A discerning guide to events in the city 74

WIT'S END Donald Trelford's tale of intrigue on the midnight train to Moscow 82

COVER West End Story, photographed by David Fairman. Make-up/hair by Toby David

HAIG MADE
WHISKY BEFORE
SCROOGE MADE
MERRY



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Preaching to the diverted

MY TEXT this month comes from the Chinese sage, Confucius, whose wisdom is always pertinent, even when the world is obsessed with the Trade Weighted Index and the decline of the zinc futures market. He said: "There is no spectacle more agreeable than to observe an old friend fall from a roof-top."

The Germans have another word for this pleasure. It is *schadenfreude*, which means literally the delight in another's misfortune. The English language has never expressed the idea in a single word, which is curious since it is a peculiarly British employment that has been much in evidence over the last month. While the stock markets crashed round the world many in Britain took a gleeful satisfaction from the knowledge that the yuppies, who are now mistakenly considered to be the only inhabitants of the City, got their come-uppance. For some, like the BBC radio broadcaster, Brian Redhead, the prospect of a large number of houses and Porsche cars being put on the market was so delightful that the real and dreadful importance of the crash was forgotten.

Another exercise in public glee was the coverage given to Lester Piggott after his conviction and imprisonment for failing to pay some £3 million to the Inland Revenue. He was perhaps the finest jockey of this century but he was also the meanest. The enjoyment of the popular Press has taken from blurred images of Piggott engaged in menial tasks in prison has been unlimited. Even *The Guardian* took a prim pleasure in saying that Mr Piggott deserved his sentence.

Certainly Piggott deserved punishment, as do others who are guilty of evading tax. But prison is an unsophisticated and pointless punishment for those who do not commit violent crimes. Far better to place Mr Piggott at the disposal of society. He could be made to perform many charitable tasks and forced to hand over the income generated by his racing activities in far greater proportions than the Inland Revenue had previously demanded. This would certainly hurt Mr Piggott more than a few years in an open prison and at the same time provide great satisfaction to those given to *schadenfreude*.

The one certainty which has emerged from the crash is that a lot of the blame can be laid at the door of the Oval office. Long before Black Monday, economists had been warning that the American budget deficit was no longer sustainable. But President Reagan, someone who likes to spend more and cut taxes at the same time, wilfully ignored their reasoning, which is why the old boy remains so popular with the American electorate. His neglect of the unpleasant problem was the worst type of political irresponsibility and it displayed a frightening lack of leadership. Worse still was his inability to react with resolve and responsibility once the stock market went into free fall. One understands, though, that by this time Reagan's standing among his advisers was

so low that they dictated to him what courses of action to follow.

The crisis is by no means over, for almost no economic manipulation will quickly restore confidence that was so severely damaged on Black Monday. Washington economists to whom I have spoken believe firmly that the crash will result in a recession if not a slump, which will begin to develop about four months into 1988. Though they are chary of saying this in public, they are convinced that the lack of leadership will ensure continuing lack of confidence. Perhaps the only thing to be thankful for is that this crisis was not military.

The devastation caused by the storms of October has had a lasting effect on London. No square or park or garden entirely escaped, and next spring there will be a marked difference in the appearance of the capital, which is one of the leafiest in the world. The government has given some money for replanting but this was announced before the full loss in London and south-east England had been properly estimated. The Fill a Gap campaign organized by the advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather is going some way to augmenting the Government funds. If any reader wishes to contribute to the campaign we will see that Ogilvy & Mather receive the donation.

Meanwhile, I have had a letter on this subject from the London Ecology Centre which makes the point that a fallen tree is not necessarily a dead tree. They implore that council and garden owners allow some of the fallen trees to grow and to add character to our parks. I hope their advice is taken.

In this issue of *The Illustrated London News* we touch both the above subjects. Edward Pearce reviews the career and prospects of Mike Dukakis, a Democratic candidate in the US Presidential race who has made a virtue of and speciality in the control of his budget in Massachusetts. Earlier in the magazine Geraldine Bedell and Sally Richardson assess the numbers of bankers and stockbrokers being dismissed from City firms and examine the novel outplacement agencies which are being used to retain and instil confidence in the victims of the "shake-out".

On an infinitely less serious note Stephen Pile talks about Australia as it enters its bicentennial celebration, Richard Ingrams visits *Spy* magazine in New York, and I have been to interview the endearingly comic figure of Quentin Montgomery-Wright at his parish in Normandy. Donald Trelford, Kingsley Amis and Enoch Powell all make outstanding contributions which were as much fun to edit as they will be to read.

The winner of the *ILN* Singapore Airlines competition is Dr P. L. Krohn from St Helier. He wins a trip for two to Bordeaux to tour the famous châteaux and taste their wines.

The results of the Bill of Rights competition will be announced in the January issue ○

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The Glenlivet. More popular now than it used to be.

For such a soft malt whisky, THE GLENLIVET® had a hard time coming into the world.

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The Government had imposed punitive taxes on whisky distilling, which John Smith found most unpalatable.

Despite the strong-arm tactics of the Excisemen, who plundered many an illicit still, John Smith was never caught and paid not a penny in duty.

Then, in 1823, commonsense broke out in Parliament.

They passed an act making legal whisky distilling an attractive proposition.

Almost immediately John Smith's grandson George (who was by now guardian of the precious dram) took out the first licence in the Highlands under the new Act.

This caused much anger amongst George's neighbours, who branded him a traitor and threatened to burn the distillery to the ground with him inside.

Mercifully, they failed.

Today, THE GLENLIVET is generally acknowledged to be Scotland's finest malt whisky.

With its mellow flavour and fragrant, distinctive nose, (the result of 12 years' ageing in the finest oak casks,) it can now be enjoyed by all.

And for that, we should be truly thankful.



Scotland's first malt whisky.



“Sitting on a small fortune was decidedly uncomfortable.”

“I suppose it was about the closest I’d ever come to a mid-life crisis.

I’d been up to my proverbial neck. My usual 12-hour working day had stretched to a norm of 15 hours. And weekends, which I once held sacrosanct, were being eaten away by paperwork.

Coincidentally John, my eldest, was safely ensconced in university and Jenny was off on some field trip to do with her Biology ‘A’ level.

So I thought, to heck with it all.

I asked my secretary to cancel all my appointments and book me a short holiday. I gave her 3 criteria: I wanted sunshine; a reasonable hotel; and she was to reveal its location to no one.

Within days my wife and I were in Miami.

While she took in the local sights, I did a lot of thinking.

On paper, I suppose, a lot of people would have envied me.

My company was growing. I had a nice house. Nice kids. Nice cars. And a nice little nest-egg of various shares that was fast approaching six figures.

What I didn’t have was time to enjoy these things.

There and then, I resolved never again to work more than a 12-hour day, and restore my weekends to their sacred status. If something wasn’t done it would just have to wait.

I felt better already.

Then, I don’t know why, I recalled a conversation with my bank manager some months previously. (Religiously, twice a

year, I take him to an outrageously expensive restaurant and insist on picking up the bill.)

Anyway, he knew about my portfolio and insisted on telling me about a service Lloyds Bank had dreamed up for its customers, and indeed anyone else, that would make their life much easier.

It was called Asset Management, or some such name.

Frankly, I hadn’t really listened because I hadn’t been that interested.

But on that holiday, the more I remembered the more appealing it became.

To cut a long story short, I signed on the dotted line within days of my return to England. The first thing Lloyds Bank did was assign me a ‘Personal Account Executive,’ one Philip Hunter.

At our initial meeting I made it clear that I wanted him to take over the whole caboodle; handle all the paper work and make the buying and selling decisions.

We also agreed a broad strategy. He was to go for capital growth rather than income. He was occasionally to chance his arm on a few speculative stocks. And, backing a hunch of mine, I wanted him to take a particular interest in small electronics companies.

Once we’d got that straight he opened an interest-bearing account to act as a pool for purchases and sale proceeds.

He even built in a ‘cash sweep’ facility on my current account, so anything over £1,000 was automatically swept into my investment account. Then he got to work.

That was about a year ago now.

And since then I’m delighted to say that I’ve done practically nothing.

I no longer spend hours poring over the City pages deciding what to buy or sell.

I no longer have weighty company reports thudding onto my doormat.

I no longer have to faff about with scissors, pins and cheques when I go for a new issue.

I no longer spend hours with a calculator working out my worth, since they send me regular statements.

And, joy of joys, I no longer need to rummage through sheafs of old contract notes in April, because they prepare a special statement for the taxman.

I also ought to add that the service has a few frills which, while not vital, are most welcome. For instance, they automatically topped my Access Card limit to £5,000. And I can now draw up to £500 a day on my Cashpoint card.

But good as their Asset Management Service undoubtedly is, Lloyds Bank isn’t a charity. All told, they charge me around £250 a quarter, which although well worth it, isn’t peanuts.

In fact, d’you know what I’m going to do next time I take my bank manager to lunch?

I’m going to invite Philip Hunter along too. And when the bill arrives, I’m not going to put my hand in my pocket.”



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A THOROUGHbred AMONGST BANKS.



The wholesale destruction of Emmetts Garden in Kent left it looking like a battlefield and was typical of the damage caused by hurricane-force

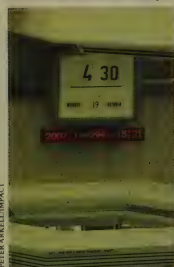


winds which swept southern England. Tens of thousands of trees were uprooted or snapped during a storm that British forecasters failed to predict

THE MONTH

THE AUTUMN OF GREAT FALLS

In London on "Black Monday" of the world share market collapse, the FT-SE index lost more than an eighth of its value and dealers traded



THIS WAS a month of great falls: when violent storms felled trees, buildings and bridges, when the stock markets collapsed in Britain and the major financial centres, when public figures such as Lester Piggott fell from grace and well-known financiers fell on hard times. The words that reverberated in the media were all synonymous with descent: crash, slump, collapse and slide.

It is debatable whether the storm, which fortunately hit Britain in the early hours of the morning and not in the daytime, or the stock market crash will make the deepest impression on the public memory: both caused startling precipitation.

The City had been feeling uneasy with the widening Guinness scandal and the arrest of three businessmen. When Wall Street

began to collapse this converted into a sense of doom. Governments seemed helpless as the crash built up a momentum of its own, and computers dictated continual decline. The atmosphere of panic was not alleviated by President Reagan's refusal to address the question of the US deficit, or by US warplanes bombing Iranian oil terminals.

This was also the month of

great and hopeful developments in relations between the superpowers, notably in the agreement between the US and USSR to sign an arms limitation accord in December. As important are the internal developments in Russia and China. The regimes in both these countries have expressed the desire to proceed from the first phase of socialism into more sophisticated, more efficient and

frantically on the International Financial Futures Exchange: in New York it was all doom and gloom as traders and investors awaited a new day



slightly more democratic states.

These separate but simultaneous reforms have huge implications for world trade and the balance of power in 15 years' time. Both countries have much greater potential as economic powers than they have so far exhibited, and their development will certainly prove to be of greater importance than the temporary crisis in the capitalist world.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

● Thirty-two people were killed, many of them schoolchildren, when an Iranian missile destroyed a primary school in Baghdad. The attack was thought to have been provoked by Iraqi attacks on Iranian oil and industrial centres the previous day.

● President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica was awarded the Nobel peace prize for his "outstanding contribution" in seeking an end to conflict in Central America.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

● Gerald Ronson, chairman of the Heron Corporation, was remanded on bail of £500,000 at Bow Street Magistrates Court after being charged with eight offences relating to the Guinness affair. The following day Roger Seelig, the former Morgan Grenfell corporate finance director, was arrested and charged with 12 offences including theft and false accounting in the same scandal. On November 3 Seelig, Sir Jack Lyons, the financier, and Eric Saunders, the former Guinness chairman, were each remanded on bail of £500,000 until April 12 next year.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

● An American-protected supertanker, the *Sungari*, was hit by an Iranian Silkworm missile injuring 80 of the crew. The White House described it as an "outrageous act of aggression against a non-belligerent Kuwait". On October 19 four US warships destroyed two Iranian oil platforms in the Gulf which it claimed were being used by Iran as a base for launching boat attacks on shipping. President Reagan described the attack as "prudent yet restrained"—the Iranian crews had been warned to abandon the rigs and the US had consulted with the Soviet Union and other permanent members of the Security Council before the strike. Kamal Kharrazi, the Iranian war spokesman, said that America had "now become involved in a fully fledged war with Iran" and promised retaliation. On October 22 a Kuwaiti oil-loading platform was hit by an Iranian long-range missile. One man was killed and the blaze took three hours to bring under control.

● President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia attacked Mrs Thatcher at the Commonwealth Conference in Vancouver, for not supporting further sanctions against South Africa. Bob Hawke of Australia, Rajiv Gandhi of India and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe also expressed their dissatisfaction at Britain's stance.

● Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau resigned as

Governor-General of Fiji following the declaration of a republic on October 6. The announcement meant that Fiji would forfeit membership of the Commonwealth but could reapply.

● Unemployment fell for the 15th successive month in September by 54,000 to 2,775,300—10 per cent of the workforce.

● Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, said that the cases of three men convicted in 1979 of the murder of a newspaper boy, Carl Bridgewater, would be referred to the Court of Appeal.

● Unemployed Kevin Weaver was charged in Avon North magistrates court with shotgun murders of two factory workers in Bristol.

● The President of the West African state of Burkina Faso, Captain Thomas Sankara, was killed and the ruling National Revolutionary Council dissolved during a coup staged by his deputy, Captain Blaise Compaore. Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

● The south coast of Britain was hit by the worst storms for more than 250 years. 19 people were killed as winds reached up to 110 mph and at least three million homes were affected by power cuts (some lasting two weeks). Nicholas Ridley, the Environment Minister, later promised that the Government would provide money for the worst-hit areas and particularly for replacing trees throughout south-east England.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

● *Triptych*, ridden by Tony Cruz, won the Champion Stakes at Newmarket for the second successive year.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

● Indian troops captured the Tamil headquarters outside Jaffna after a week of fighting during which 400 Tamil Tigers and 120 Indian troops were killed. On October 26 Indian troops moved into the centre of Jaffna as the Tigers withdrew and disappeared into the heavily populated Jaffna peninsula.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

● The Wall Street stock market suffered a massive one-day fall with a drop of 508.32 points (22.6 per cent). In a wave of international selling, other stock markets fell sharply (the Hong Kong stock exchange closed for four days) with the London FT-SE index closing 249.6 points down (11 per cent). The next day the Dow Jones on Wall Street recovered to rise by 102.27 points after moves by the US Federal Reserve to restore calm, but in London the FT-SE Index closed a record 250.7 points lower. By the end of the week, after several rises and falls, nearly £102 billion had been wiped off London stock market shares with a total loss of 506.7 points (22 per cent). The following week began badly in London and Hong Kong although by October 30 world stock markets appeared to be staging a slight recovery with rises in New York, Tokyo and Europe.

● Four people were killed in west Wales when a commuter train from



LONEWOLF/SIPA

An Iranian oil rig burns in the Gulf after being hit by US destroyers

Swansea to Shrewsbury crashed through a bridge whose central span had been swept away by the River Towy after heavy rain.

● Noboru Takeshita, Japan's former finance minister, was selected to take over as president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

● Golfer Ian Woosnam became the first Briton to win the Suntory World

Matchplay Championship when he beat Sandy Lyle in the final at Wentworth.

● Jacqueline du Pré, the cellist who was struck down by multiple sclerosis in 1973, died aged 42.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

● Fawn Hall, the former secretary/shredder of Colonel Oliver North, was issued a \$10 ticket for eating a banana



Liberation Tigers guard a guerrilla post in Jaffna. At least 1,000 people died in three weeks as Indian troops fought to take the Tamil stronghold



China's new party chief Zhao Ziyang, flanked by his predecessor Deng Xiaoping, in Peking



The cellist Jacqueline du Pré died in London



At the Kremlin, Mikhail Gorbachev reiterated his intention to restructure the Soviet society



Lester Piggott, the former jockey, was jailed

on a Washington subway. "I was in total amazement," she said.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22

● A Belgian officer who ordered the crew of a minesweeper to use dolphins as target practice was recalled by the defence ministry. On October 23 the US Defence Department acknowledged that five dolphins were being sent to the Gulf to augment "under-

water surveillance and detection capability".

● A light aircraft took off without its owner in New York state while he was cranking the propeller. It was later found on top of a tree 65 miles away.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

● Bank base rates were cut from 10 to 9½ per cent—this was cut to 9 per cent on November 4. It was also announced

that Britain's current account deficit had narrowed to £55 million in September, an £874 million improvement on the previous month.

● Lester Piggott, the former champion jockey turned trainer, was jailed for three years by Ipswich Crown Court after pleading guilty to 10 offences of tax fraud involving cheating the Inland Revenue of £3.25 million.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

● Police said they had uncovered at least £7.5 million-worth of cocaine in a raid on Victorian catacombs beneath West Norwood cemetery in London.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25

● At the 13th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party Zhao Ziyang, acting general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, said that he

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intended to put an end to the country's "poverty and backwardness" but that it would take another century to achieve modernization. On November 2, Zhao was officially confirmed as Party General Secretary.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26

- Lord Havers announced his resignation as Lord Chancellor. He will be succeeded by Lord Mackay of Clashfern.

- The manager of the Merrill Lynch brokerage firm in Miami was shot dead and another employee was seriously injured by an investor who suffered heavy losses thought to be \$5 million during the stock market crash. He then shot himself.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

- Gilbert McNamee, an IRA bomb maker, was jailed for 25 years at the Old Bailey for conspiracy to cause explosions. Police said he was responsible for at least 10 London bombs including the IRA attack on the Household Cavalry at Hyde Park in 1982 when four soldiers died.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

- Sacked handyman George Stephenson was given six life sentences at Winchester Crown Court for the brutal murders of his elderly employers, Joseph and Hilda Cleaver and their son and nurse, at their home, Burgate House, Fordingbridge. Stephenson's accomplices, John and George Daly, were jailed for life and 22 years respectively.

- Twelve people were killed in a motorway pile-up on the M61 near Preston when a tanker ran into the back of slow-moving vehicles.

- Lord Young, the Trade and Industry Secretary, announced that he did not wish to be considered for the job of Conservative party chairman because of a campaign against him by cabinet members, who felt the role incompatible with his present job. On November 2 Peter Brooke, the Paymaster General, was appointed chairman.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

- Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced that he was going ahead with the £7.2 billion shares sale of BP despite the stock market crash. However, he made allowances for underwriters, who stood to lose £1 billion, by allowing them to sell shares back to the Bank of England at not less than 70p each. The following day the new shares closed at 85p, compared with the 120p offer price.

- At least 278 people were thought to have been killed when rebels ambushed a government convoy in Mozambique. The ruling Frelimo party said South Africa had directed the attack.

- Penelope Lively won the £15,000 Booker Prize for Fiction for her novel *Moon Tiger*.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

- President Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed that they would hold a summit in Washington on December 7 where they will sign an arms treaty on intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

- A Panamanian-registered coaster

carrying 150 tons of arms and explosives for the IRA was seized by the French navy off Brittany. It was alleged that Libya was the source of the weapons. On November 4, five Irishmen were charged with terrorist offences by the French authorities.

- Associated Newspapers said they were closing the *Evening News* which had been launched in February as a spoiling operation to foil Robert Maxwell's *London Daily News*, which closed in July.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

- The Sealink cross-Channel ferry, *Horsa*, was forced to return to Boulogne 10 minutes after leaving for Folkestone when it was discovered that it was overloaded with 238 extra passengers.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2

- Mikhail Gorbachev launched the celebrations for the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution with a speech at the Kremlin's Palace of Congress. He emphasized his desire to implement his far-reaching social and economic reforms.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

- Nigel Lawson gave an Autumn Statement in which he unveiled substantial increases in cash targets for public spending although Government borrowing would fall. However, he forecast a slowdown in economic growth, a wider balance of payments deficit and higher inflation in 1988. The following day Lawson urged the US administration to make "essential" budget cutbacks including tax increases and so prevent a world recession. On November 6 the pound reached a five-year high against the dollar at \$1.7830.

- The Ministry of Defence police Special Investigations Branch said it would be examining allegations of brutality among soldiers of the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

- John O'Grady, the Irish dentist kidnapped on October 14, was freed during a gun battle in a Dublin suburb. The kidnappers, led by the terrorist Dessie O'Hare, escaped but later two of the gang were captured only to escape from Tipperary police station helped by dense fog. After several hours both men were recaptured.

- Caspar Weinberger resigned as US Secretary of Defence and was succeeded by Frank Carlucci.

- Eamonn Andrews, broadcaster and host of *This Is Your Life*, died aged 64.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6

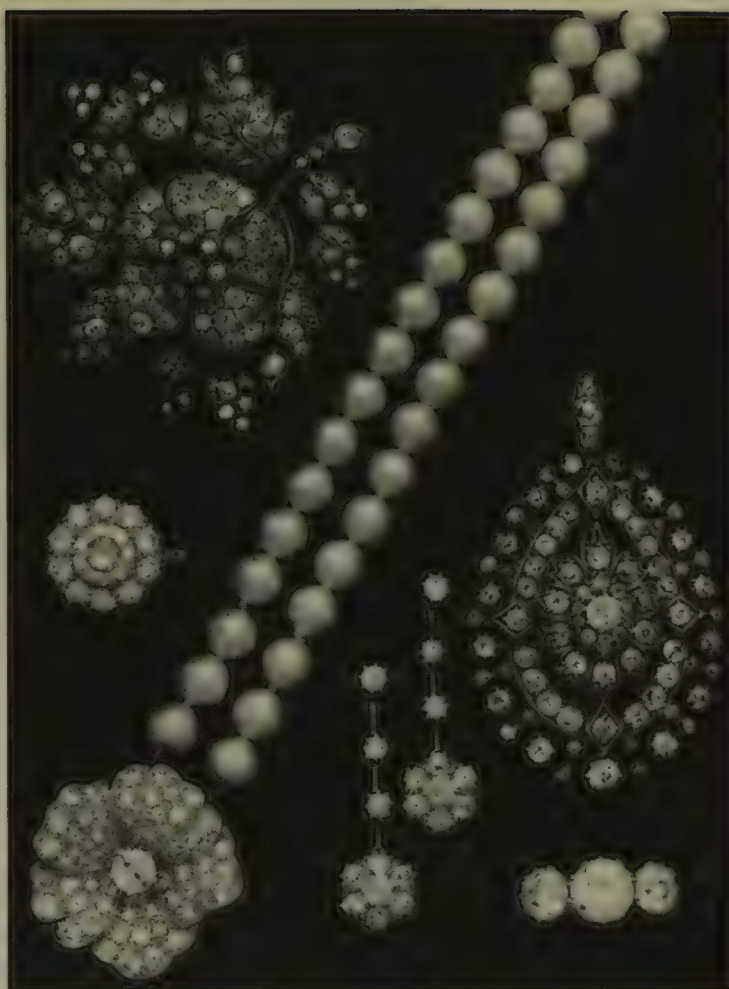
- General Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, the Tunisian prime minister, seized power in a bloodless coup from 84-year-old president for life Habib Bourguiba.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

- Eleven people were killed and 63 were injured when an IRA bomb exploded shortly before the start of a Remembrance Day service in Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh.

- Australia beat England by seven runs to win the World Cup in Calcutta ○

—SIMON HORSFORD



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HIGHLIGHTS

Taxing times of a capital transfer;
how to steal a car radio; food for lovers and
naughty nudes at the National Gallery



THE COLUMN

Hassles of London living

AT THE risk of kicking a cliché when it is down I have to say that I am just a bit tired of London without being in the least tired of life.

I am tired of the place even though I have been back in London for a mere 10 weeks. After living in the city for the best part of 10 years without noticing any marked fatigue, I had six months' parole in Washington DC. And now, on surrendering myself voluntarily back into custody, I find I grow wearier by the day.

Now before you say it, I will. Washington DC is a very different city from London. It is much smaller, for one thing. It is absurdly racially segregated. It is ridiculously overstocked with attorneys, politicians, lobbyists, journalists and diplomats. It is a city where you are arrested by your fellow citizens and fined for eating a banana on the tube. It is, in short, a flawed sort of a place and not in the least comparable

with London. Quite so. And the following is not a one-man *jeu sans frontières* between the two cities. It is simply an explanation of why I feel tired of London. The realization has dawned that living in London is really quite difficult. This is mainly the fault of the motor car. Dr Johnson probably never sat in a three-quarter-hour lunch-time Shaftesbury Avenue traffic jam in his life.

Getting anywhere in London is difficult. Seeing people is difficult. Shopping is difficult. Going to the cinema is difficult. Getting to a train on time is difficult. Meeting someone for a drink is difficult. Going to the library is difficult. It is difficult with a car and it is difficult without a car. I have tried London by foot, by bus, by tube, by bike and by motorbike. It is all difficult.

Take shopping. On our return from the States I decided we needed a new kitchen table and headed off to Habitat (where else?)

to purchase one. It took 40 minutes to park near the store, though, needless to say, not near enough to be within lugging distance of a trestle table. Nor did that matter in the least since there turned out to be four weeks' delivery on trestle tables. Which has since expanded to seven. This is not a swipe at Sir Terence since the eponymous Conran store in Washington can be faulted neither for its ease of access nor for the range of its stock. It is simply a swipe at London.

Think about the mechanics of social life in London. We live in north-east London; we have close friends who live in south-west. A round trip by day can take anything between an hour and an hour and three quarters. Result? Our children rarely see their children. Well, just close your eyes and think about the Marylebone Road at 7pm with two bawling kids under four in the back. Social life becomes as spontaneous as the

intervening distance and one's knowledge of the A to Z will allow.

In Washington it was different. Nearly everyone we knew lived within 20 minutes, many within 10. This took some adapting to, but eventually we learned that you really could invite people to drop round for a meal/a drink/a snack in half an hour. That you could see friends more than once a month and still find things to talk about. That familiarity bred content.

Or take exercise. I like playing squash. It is the only sanction I have ever come across that acts as any kind of restraint on the worst imperialist instincts of what we can euphemistically call my waistline. Of course, you cannot park near the local squash court at work. Nor, when I last tried, could you make a booking by telephone. So each game involved two trips by car: one to book and one to play and pick up the parking ticket. Except I have stopped taking the car into work (a) because of the parking charges, and (b) because of the car-radio thieves who prey upon those rich and stupid enough to come by car. I have no idea what I can possibly do about it,

so I shall stop whingeing on.

The one thing more enervating than London is reading the endless magazine articles on people who have exchanged three bedrooms in Tooting for 75 acres of mid-Wales. The rolling pastures, beamed houses and salmon lakes look blissful. But there is invariably a haunting aspect about the faces of their newly-arrived owners. It looks suspiciously like boredom.

Speaking of car-radio thefts, I am about to tell you something not many people know. That is, a quick and simple way to break into a car. I feel sure that *The Illustrated London News* subscribers can be trusted to treat this information with due discretion.

It was a policeman who told me, actually. If I understood the constable correctly, what the enterprising young hooligan in search of a car radio does is to snap off the ceramic top of a sparking plug, smash it with a hammer, and carry a chip of it around in his pocket. When he spots a likely Blaupunkt the hooligan whips out his chip of ceramic and throws it at the driver's window with considerable force. This causes the window to shatter swiftly and silently. I am repeating only what the policeman told me.

The advantages of a ceramic chip over a brick wrapped in an old sock should be obvious to all. But the Yard has now decreed that there is no obvious legitimate purpose in carrying the shattered top of a sparking plug in one's pocket, and has begun to arrest anyone in possession of same for going equipped with intent.

The policeman also told me that most of the young hooligans go out looking for a specific model and with a particular customer in mind. This conflicts with the evidence of a mini-cab driver I had the other day who told me the office is for ever being pestered by the young hooligans trying to unload 200 quid's worth of Pioneer stereo for £25.

I have been without a radio since the last one vanished amid a puddle of shattered glass a month or so ago and I feel greater peace of mind without one, but, God, radioless traffic jams can be a horrible bore.

Do you ever get the feeling, staring at the walls of recipe books that engulf most bookshops today, that there just cannot be that many new recipes to go round? Of course there aren't. Indeed, a modest

Amstrad could probably work out the possible permutations of available raw materials and the palatable ways in which they can be combined.

So now authors have taken to padding out cookbooks with recipes plagiarized ("adapted") from earlier writers and with endless waffle about themselves, their friends and families and about such and such occasion on which they tucked into such and such a memorable dish.

I blame Norah Ephron for including so many passable recipes in her novel, *Heartburn*. The cookery writers have evidently decided to hit back by including enormous chunks of otherwise unpublishable novels in their cookbooks.

The latest, which landed on my desk this month, is *The Food of Love* (Chatto & Windus), by one Guislaine Morland. It has a reasonable number of recipes in it, let us be fair. But the reader also has patiently to bear with Ms Morland as she separates, divorces, has flings, comforts dear friends, discusses deconstruction, moves house and much, much else.

The work poses an interesting question: do you trust a cookbook written by a woman who confesses

(on page 62) to having worked out her anger on soon-to-be-ex-husband by feeding him on a can of Alpo dogfood? Myself, I feel more warmly inclined to the author, but I can see others might differ. (Those wishing to try it might follow Ms Morland's handy hint for disguising that distinctive flavour of Alpo with a deft *sauce marchand de vin*.)

We follow the split-up with Miles (not Mr Dogmeat—that was Harry) and Toby's shyness with women ("Toby's taste in women had been pungent, strong and exotic. And Toby loves stews."). Lino gets arrested, although he does have a risotto named after him—Risotto di Lino. Toby falls in love, presumably with a strong, pungent woman, and has to make do with a stew in his honour.

This is all very interesting. But do I really want to be reminded of Toby's exotic amorous pursuits every time I tuck into my *poireaux à la coriandre*? Must I for ever associate *légumes au pot remonte-pente* with Branko's labours to produce his philosophical treatise? Or shall I just stick with good old Elizabeth David?

The better London clubs exude the mellow whiff of unruffled, butlered

calm. Do not be deceived. They are often, in my limited experience, cauldrons of seething discontent and feuding. The bloodstains are usually to be found in the club suggestions book.

Just such a controversy has been raging at one distinguished club I recently visited. For weeks now, serried ranks of retired mandarins, baronets and judges have fired fearsome salvos at a new and insidious influence that has penetrated the institution in question. I refer to the brown roll.

The tone of the entries has, I regret to say, denigrated from icy restraint through fury to despair. The day I lunched there one member returned from his meal to explode across the pages. The cry of anguish read: "I have little doubt that brown rolls are very 'good for you', as nanny would have said. But I prefer to go to damnation by my own chosen path." I urge the club secretary to take pity on these men, who have, in their day, all performed some small service for their country. And urgently.

Norman Tebbit is to be applauded for his brave remarks equating the distinguished school of portraiture in *The Star* and *The Sun* with the nudes in the National Gallery. It is to be hoped that with his encouragement the Gallery will drop its prudish objection to the general public being allowed access to the hitherto top-secret Lord Stevens Collection.

Few have ever glimpsed this priceless archive of previously suppressed work by some of the greatest painters and sculptors. Art historians will be particularly interested to see Rubens's early series of Spanish Stunnas, completed between 1609 and 1611, which include rare portraits of a Señorita Fox—a girl, Rubens once confided to a friend, with a lot to boast about!

Interest will also centre on Gauguin's rarely-seen Tahitian Tremblers and on Bernini's early version of the Ecstasy of St Theresa in which buxom Tess leaves little to the imagination! Picasso admirers will want to linger over works from his little-known Deep Blue period. And Manet devotees will be intrigued by his sketches for *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* which show the lunchers to have been his favourite Amateur Stunnas from his suppressed Girl Next Door series. As Mr Tebbit observed, it's all innocent fun ○

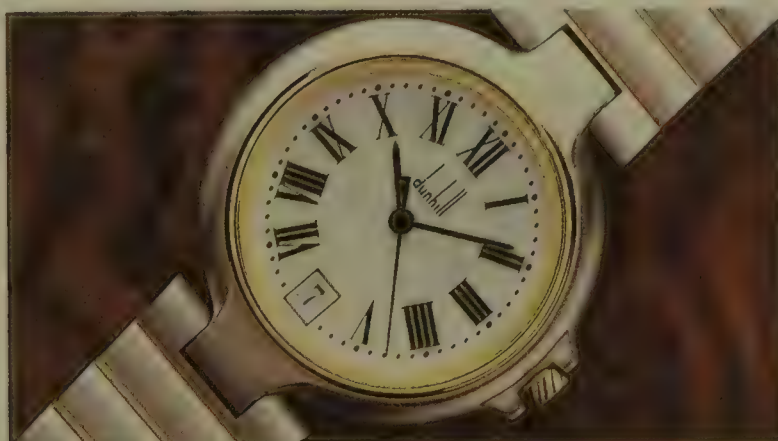
—ALAN RUSBRIDGER



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dunhill

HERITAGE

Peter the great fake



Peter de Savary, champion of Littlecote in Wiltshire, and Land's End

PETER de Savary describes himself as a countryman. After buying Land's End recently for £6.73 million he assured local people that his company has "hands-on experience of managing sensitive heritage properties". However, "countryman" is not an immediately obvious label for the celebrated headline-hogger, party-giver and loudly self-proclaimed patriot and philanthropist. It is a role on which he has been working

with his customary energy for the past two-and-a-half years, since he paid a reported £8 million for his Wiltshire mansion, Littlecote.

The house lies across the River Kennet from Chilton Foliat, a quiet and pretty village, and an expensive place to live. Well over half of those who live there are "outsiders". They make their money in London, or hi-tech Newbury, returning for evenings and weekends to sniff the downland air. New-

comers they may be, but they paid steep prices to secure their version of the rural idyll. And many see it under assault from what Mr de Savary is up to across the river.

Littlecote has a past to match its imposing size. The monarchs of England were entertained there. It was the home of the Pophams, one of them Elizabeth I's Lord Chief Justice, another a devoted supporter of Cromwell.

In short, Littlecote has "history". It is a property which de Savary has milked with indiscriminate enthusiasm in creating what is known in the jargon as a theme park. It announces itself as "The Land Time Forgot". It swarms with breast-plated, buff-coated Cavaliers and Roundheads. On the lawns—in the words of the official programme—"lusty knights do combat with lance, sword, and mace". Elsewhere bodiced wenches cavort in festive dances and malefactors beam from the stocks.

From this slice of Old England you may wander to the Roman Villa, taking in a touch of the Wild West at Fort Littlecote, and perhaps catching a glimpse of assorted falconers, basket-weavers, sheep-shearers and so forth. Repairing to that jolly hostelry the Popham Arms Tavern, you will, in exchange for a goodly pile of groats, be plied with ale and victuals by a winsome damsel.

Most of the dishes on this historical buffet table are viewed by Mr de Savary's neighbours with tolerant, somewhat disdainful amusement, although the tooting of the trans-Littlecote steam train, and the periodic re-enactments of Naseby and Marston Moor have provoked murmurs of irritation.

Two of the vital components of the rural idyll are, of course, "peace and quiet" (the phrase runs like law and order). Shatter them, and you will have warfare. So the moment at which the amplifiers were switched up at the so-called Gatecrashers Ball, staged at Littlecote on a still, warm evening in late summer, amounted to a declaration of hostilities. According to de Savary's opponents, the disco din boomed along miles of the Kennet valley until breakfast time the next morning. In the converted barns and beneath the newly thatched roofs, the self-appointed guardians of the rural peace plotted revenge.

Council officers were called out to take noise readings. Complaints poured in to the police. The local newspapers were alerted. A pe-

tition was raised. The parish councils of Chilton Foliat and neighbouring Ramsbury registered their disgust. An official noise restriction order was slapped on Littlecote.

Those immediately involved in the anti-de Savary campaign will hotly insist that their sole concern is to preserve the essence of country life. But de Savary's champions—he does have them—see the row over noise levels as a pretext. They detect a whiff of élitism in the air, a longing to do down the *arriviste*.

Having spoken to some of his enemies and supporters, I found the great entrepreneur in the library at Littlecote, attended by his management team. He was talking loudly into a telephone when I sat down and then proceeded to talk very loudly at me. He acted as if he had been reading an instruction manual for tycoons. He ignored questions, accompanying his monologue with an incessant waving of a huge cigar.

His enemies he characterized as "troublemakers... busybodies... even 'pigs'". He accused the chief of them—Mr Stephen Martin, a parish councillor—of lacking what he called "country manners". "Why hasn't he spoken to me? I'm here, I'm accessible. I tell you, I'm deeply hurt that my own neighbour will not come here."

The mood changes with a suck at his cigar. "If I find out that people don't like what I'm doing, I'll get out. I could destroy this heritage, blow out 800 years of history; gut the place and flog it, or let it fall down, which is what was happening when I bought it."

De Savary loftily dismisses the suggestion that his motives might be commercial. "I spend £600,000 a year subsidizing Littlecote. Why? Because it's my home and I love it, and I want to share it with as many people as I can. And I'm not going to be pushed out by a tiny, destructive minority, because that's the communist way. I'm warning the troublemakers that I'll give as good as I get."

It was an endearing performance and an entertaining one, a lot better than the display of knightly discord put on each afternoon in front of Littlecote by bad Sir Guy of Gisbourne and the noble Sir Lancelot du Lac. I believe him, too. De Savary does not seem to be a man either to forget a grudge or to be troubled by notions of chivalry when pursuing his prey ○

—TOM FORT

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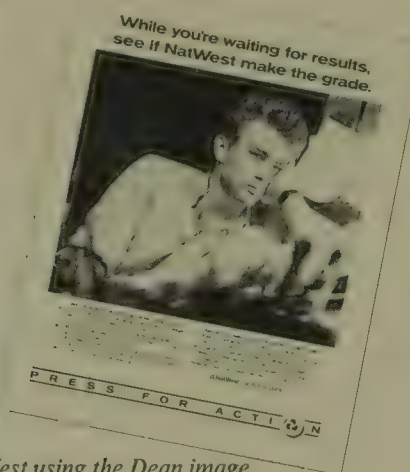
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Mark Roesler and one of J. Walter Thompson's posters for Nat West using the Dean image

MARKETING

The agent for the departed

"I'M A BUSINESS agent. I have a lot of clients... most of them are dead."

Not that Mark A. Roesler, 31-year-old President of the Curtis Licensing Corporation, is worried. They were all dead before he signed them.

Roesler is, in American terminology, an estate agent; from his office in Indiana he looks after the estates of dead celebrities on behalf of their surviving families. His client list is not only dead, it is also dead impressive: James Dean, Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Mark Twain, baseball star Babe Ruth and (in North America only) Charlie Chaplin.

His main rival in the States, Roger Richman, who is based in California, handles (as it were) Marilyn Monroe, W. C. Fields and Einstein. Between them, they have more or less carved up the desirable dead.

Estate agents grant licences to manufacturers allowing them to use the name or image of the stars. In an advanced civilization like the USA the courts recognize a dead celebrity's "right of publicity"; but in more backward territories like the UK, where we are not quite as comfortable with the idea of making money out of dead people's faces, Roesler has to rely on trademark law.

He has just licensed a range of James Dean denim-wear in this country. Dean is his hottest property, and the UK the country where he's hottest. Roesler receives about 10 business proposals concerning Dean each week.

"But you gotta remember that the ones that are actually serious

..." Roesler hesitates, looking for a diplomatic way of saying it. "Well, we're very careful. We don't need people to do products."

He regularly stops projects involving pictures of the car in which Dean died, "or morbid sayings about Dean; things like 'Live Fast Die Young'. Things that would promote the morbid aspect of Dean." People keep trying. Indeed, the new denim-wear bears the legend "James Dean. 1931-1955. Live fast."

"Yeah," admits Roesler, "they wanted to put 'die young' on it, but..." Roesler regularly lets his sentences trail off into silence. His training as a lawyer has left him a master of omission, implying a lot, while saying nothing.

Among the forthcoming James Dean goodies are a computer game, a range of fragrances and a complete range of James Dean bedding—the Legend Collection. "That's been kind of a rocky trip, to be perfectly honest with you..." fades Roesler.

Roesler was born a month after Dean died (and the legend was born), and only 7 miles from Dean's hometown of Fairmount, Indiana. Before training as a lawyer he was already writing chapter one of *The Typical American Success Story*; he and a friend set up their own business while they were still at school.

They chose roofing. "You could just walk down the street and spot the houses that needed work. Then when it rained and we couldn't work, we'd sit inside, get on the phone, call people, and say, 'Do you have any roof problems?' at

exactly the time when they knew they did. That's where I developed my commercial sense."

After training as a lawyer, Roesler joined the Curtis Publishing Company, which owned the *Saturday Evening Post*. After the death of painter Norman Rockwell, the demand for his *Post* covers was so enormous that Curtis set up its Licensing Corporation. Roesler moved over to this division, and soon realized that there were other dead certainties out there.

He took over Elvis Presley in 1982. "Before that the Colonel (Tom Parker, Elvis's manager) handled all that. The executors of the estate did not feel that the Colonel was acting in the estate's best interests, so they terminated that arrangement."

In 1984 the James Dean Foundation was set up. Before that, Dean's family did not receive a penny from any of the Dean products around. Now Roesler licenses all uses of his name or face, and the proceeds—following Roesler's middle-man cut—go to Dean's father, Winton, to the aunt who raised him, Ortense, and to her children, who grew up with Dean.

Among the licensees are American M W Inc, which makes greeting cards and musical T-shirts; Celebrity Shade, which makes car sun shades; and Shady Character Ltd, which makes a complete range of James Dean spectacles.

The other part of Roesler's job is to stop unlicensed products, or simply to say a firm no to the more ridiculous—or, indeed, nauseat-

ing—suggestions he receives.

One firm wanted to manufacture a James Dean bath towel, which would feature a design based on a magnified impression of Dean's fingerprints. "They were going to pay for a forensic expert to come and lift his fingerprints off some of his personal items."

You almost wish he'd said yes to that one; it would have been fun thinking of all the movie fans and prototype angry young men round the world drying themselves on towels showing the fingerprints of the last person to dust in Dean's old room.

That one was stopped at the planning stage, but somebody really was selling bottles of Elvis Presley's sweat... until Roesler tracked him down. And someone else was selling pieces of denim which allegedly came from Dean's own blue jeans—a 20th-century equivalent of the sale of medieval religious relics.

The biggest users of James Dean are advertising agencies. Among many other products, he has sold Maxell tapes and the *National Geographic* magazine. Most recently Dean has been used to sell the Nat West bank in this country. But that was done without Roesler's permission.

The agency involved, J. Walter Thompson, may just get away with it as they never referred to Dean by name in the advertisements, but they could find themselves in court. Roesler now has a UK trademark lawyer looking at the campaign.

Dean is clearly the biggest money-spinner at the moment—licensees pay anything from \$1,000 to several hundred thousand. But asked to give a top ten of the most lucrative dead celebrities, Roesler declines: it may give away his future business plans and there is no shortage of pirates. But according to top marketers in the States, the order is fairly clear.

After Dean comes Marilyn Monroe. Then, in third place, Elvis Presley. Fourth is Humphrey Bogart, and fifth, John Wayne. Next comes Charlie Chaplin, and then, a considerable way behind, Buddy Holly.

Nobody else is really big money at the moment. It appears that despite the obvious advantages that dead stars have—they will not fluff their lines, turn up late for the shoot, or end up in the tabloid gossip columns—there are only so many who will actually shift a product ○

—MARK EDWARDS

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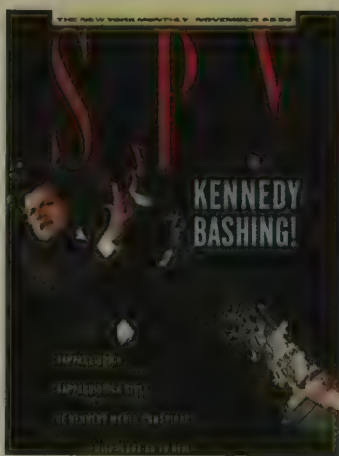
Eye spy success in New York

IN OCTOBER, 1984, when I was still the editor of *Private Eye*, I was paid a visit at Carlisle Street by an extremely nice journalist from New York called Graydon Carter who had recently been working for *Life*. I decided he was even nicer when he said he had long been an admirer of the *Eye*. Now, he said, he was planning along with one or two colleagues to launch a similar type of publication in New York to be called *Spy* and would welcome any advice I might like to give. In a slightly patronizing spirit I talked for some time, showed him over the works and invited him to the *Eye* lunch at the Coach and Horses. After he had gone I thought to myself: Well, I've seen it all before. This young man has high hopes but the American public just does not like satire and disrespectful *Eye*-type journalism.

Three years later I found myself got up in a smart tuxedo standing shoulder to shoulder with him in an enormous ballroom in New York along with 1,500 other people at a party to celebrate the first year of *Spy*. Luckily the noise was sufficient to drown the sound of me eating my words. Not that by this stage I needed any convincing. After only two or three days in the city I already knew just from meeting people that *Spy* was a hit. Everybody was talking about it—a much more reliable guide to the success of a paper than any circulation graph.

In New York, journalism is to do with magazines far more than newspapers. There are only three papers in the city, one of which, the *New York Post*, is of little account. New Yorkers have always liked magazines but with more and more amalgamations in the publishing world the products have tended to become indistinguishable from one another. They are glossy and slick, pandering to the American worship of money and success. Features in one magazine could be easily transferred to another without anyone noticing.

To go, as I did, directly from the magazine world of Madison Avenue to the *Spy* offices in Lafayette Street, SoHo, was instructive. On Madison you are in a battery farm where staff sit in drab windowless offices and there



Exclusive feel: the year-old *Spy*

is nothing much to suggest a journalistic atmosphere. It is all just an adjunct to the New York money-making machine. But go down town to Lafayette Street and to a handsome 19th-century red brick edifice known as the Puck Building—it once housed a humorous magazine of that name—and you find a different scene altogether. *Spy* has taken over the ninth floor.

There is an air, difficult to define, of confidence. You have to remind yourself that this magazine has been going only for a year and, with a circulation of over 40,000, has still to break even. Much of this confidence is generated by Graydon himself, a 38-year-old Canadian—the son of a jet pilot—who was once a speech-writer for Pierre Trudeau. Being a Canadian, I suspect, gives him a helpful sense of detachment from the New York scene, enabling him to observe it all with a greater degree of amazement and, when necessary, indignation. There is a solidity and good sense about him which stands out in the neurotic atmosphere of the Big Apple.

But *Spy* is not a one-man band. All good magazines are produced by gangs or cliques. In the case of *Spy* there is a triumvirate—Graydon Carter, Kurt Anderson (his co-editor), a friend and colleague from *Life*, and Tom Phillips, who runs the business department, introduced to Carter by Anderson's wife. Talking to the three of them I get the feeling of a strong team and, more importantly, of a general unanimity about the targets. There is also an undoubted

air of excitement. They are saying a lot of nasty things about the rich and powerful and have discovered to their delight that lots of people want to read what they say.

Any new magazine has to fill a gap. In the case of *Private Eye* it was the slow decline of *Punch* that made possible its success. The New York equivalent of *Punch* is *The New Yorker*, in its early years a lively and unpredictable magazine produced by a group of brilliantly talented people. But Americans, in particular, find frivolity a strain and some time ago *The New Yorker* began to take itself seriously, becoming in the process an institution, which is fatal for a magazine.

Now *Spy* seems to have emerged to take over the torch, and, intentionally or not, the newcomer has a great deal in common with its famous predecessor. To an English eye it seems extraordinarily chic. The lay-out and graphics are original and highly sophisticated and, aside from the satire, there are signs throughout of an affection for and concern with New York itself.

A recent feature listed a number of rare survivals like the Lexington Candy Shop where you can still buy "high-cholesterol all-American staples in picturesque surroundings". And there are regular and informative guide-maps showing, for example, where one can go, free of charge, for a quick snog during the lunch hour. One recent and very New Yorkerish item pointed out that the writing above New York's Chinese restaurants often has no bearing on what goes on inside, quoting one which read "celebration party following success in the local civil service examination".

But there is more to *Spy* than mere urban sophistication. Part of the secret of the magazine's success, I suspect, lies in the way it has not been slow to run long exposés of the type that would be anathema to most American journals—a definitive guide to the lawyers who defend the Mafia or a hilarious account of how Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* sent two half-wits on a wild-goose chase for Josef Mengele.

What impresses the English visitor like myself is the thorough-

ness of these pieces. Unlike the *Eye*, which has been accused, perhaps on occasion with justification, of shooting from the hip, Carter and his colleagues lay great emphasis on getting it right. Every article is read, reread and combed for possible inaccuracies by the seven fact-checkers working on the staff—a department that consumes a third of the entire editorial budget but which in the eyes of Carter and Anderson is worth every dime. American readers want guaranteed information and facts. They are not interested in gossip and rumour. This attention to accuracy is even more commendable in that it is observed in a much freer society than our own—its laws of libel are nothing like as rigorous as those in England.

In other respects the magazine shares common ground with the *Eye*. I like in particular what is now a regular full-page feature on the goings-on at the *New York Times*—often bearing the signature of J. J. Hunsecker, the gossip columnist in the film *The Sweet Smell of Success*. The *Times* occupies a unique position in New York. As the only serious paper its power is enormous. An adverse review of a book or a play can be ruinous. "The *Times* dictates the agenda for the city," says Anderson. "You can't even sell a car in New York without the *Times*." Not surprisingly the *Times* takes itself immensely seriously and until *Spy* came along no one dared to criticize it. Now all that has changed. The hitherto God-like *Times* men are exposed as fallible bunglers and lecherous knaves.

In this feature, similar to the *Eye*'s "Street of Shame", Carter and Anderson have, whether consciously or not, hit on the secret of a magazine like *Spy*. Contrary to what some may think, the public actually enjoys being told about people that they have never heard of and even reading articles that they may not fully understand, so long as they are given the feeling that they are being introduced to an exclusive club which may be so "in" that even the editor doesn't quite know what is going on. *Spy* has that exclusive feel about it and, considering that it has been running only for a year, it is an extraordinary achievement. So long as Graydon and his colleagues can resist the urge to take themselves seriously, as I'm sure they can, I would predict that *Spy* has a long and prosperous future ○

—RICHARD INGRAMS

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HIGHLIGHTS



F. SCIANNAMAGNUM

Television mogul Silvio Berlusconi, one of the new Milanese condottieri

BUSINESS

Italy born again

PLUMP raindrops chase each other across the thick, green-tinted windowpane. The paths they trace are almost horizontal owing to our 200 kph speed. Outside the silver-bullet train, the landscape of fertile flatlands framed by tall mountains zips silently past.

In the corner seat opposite me, my companion is talking about economic muscle and about millionaires. No one cares about the politicians these days, he says. The country's great romance is with business. Trade and manufacturing, that's what excites people. Japan? No, we are rolling across the Emilia Romagna in Italy, on our way to Milan.

"Milan now has more millionaires than any city in Europe," claims my Italian friend. "Maybe more than any city in the world. It's a city that's become incredibly rich. They don't ride around in Rolls-Royces or Ferraris; they live in ordinary apartments. There is nothing special about being a millionaire in Milan these days."

Leaning back against the plush upholstery, cosseted by sound-proofing that insulates and cradles the traveller like few trains I know, my friend warms to his theme of Italy's wealth. He is himself a financial specialist who abandoned the booming Hong Kong stock market—before the crash—for Italy's still lusher pastures. "Milan's business is money," he says. "But in truth the whole of Italy has become prosperous."

The Italians have discovered the joys of Big Business. As a game, naturally, and also as a source of national pride. All those jokes in which Italians are despised tragi-

comic figures have left their mark. For their businessmen to be outdoing the rest of Europe in many areas of hi-tech is for Italians a way of re-establishing Italy's position as the natural pinnacle of the civilized world. Today, life is about gritty industrial production, not just stylish design and packaging for other people's goods. Modern Italians have had enough of being treated as the mere curators of their own cultural heritage.

High finance has also become a spectator sport for the Italians. The derring-do and flamboyance of takeovers and boardroom battles are highly attractive to a people who invented Roman circuses, gladiators and blood feuds. A select band of larger-than-life figures now stalk the country. Men like Olivetti's Carlo De Benedetti, Raul Gardini—creator of the multi-billion dollar Ferruzzi food group—and the independent television mogul Silvio Berlusconi have become the new *condottieri* of Italy. And, like those bold Renaissance soldiers of fortune, they can be a law unto themselves.

These men are rich, powerful and energetic. They are, in short, the new industrial barons of Europe. As the Rome correspondent of the *Financial Times* put it not long ago: "Italian capitalism is moving abroad in search of growth. A Ferruzzi takeover in Britain or a De Benedetti acquisition in France is to most Italians as satisfying as, and far less dangerous than, a colonial adventure was to their grandparents."

Carlo De Benedetti, the man who has catapulted Olivetti from being just another struggling

typewriter concern into a world-beating hi-tech powerhouse, is a case in point. He has set up a Paris-based company called Cerus, whose sole purpose is to prowl the takeover trail throughout Europe. De Benedetti seems particularly interested in Britain, and earlier this year bought a sizeable (4.9 per cent) chunk of Pearson, the *Financial Times*'s owners, well before Rupert Murdoch hit the headlines with his purchase of what the *FT* called a "hostile" equity stake.

In the steel industry, tycoons like the dynamic Cecilia Danieli are set on developing a European empire and are talking about buying some of Volvo's industrial subsidiaries in Sweden. And inside Italy, the Italians are also buying back businesses that used to be dominated by American multinationals. Last year the three brothers who run the successful Jacarossi energy group bought Texaco's whole operation.

Not all Europeans welcome the Italian business boom. Britain's establishment quickly closed ranks when Ferruzzi tried to buy British Sugar, and the French government invoked "strategic" interests to prevent De Benedetti from taking outright control of the Valeo motor car components group there.

It is not just in the takeovers and mergers scene that the Italians shine. In high technology they are also showing the rest of Europe how to push back Japanese and American competition. Olivetti is almost alone among European electronics companies to be making headway in the computer market. Fiat is not just a successful car company, which has narrowed to a whisker Volkswagen's lead as Europe's biggest car producer, but it is also a redoubtable hi-tech and armaments giant.

Remarkably, only a few years ago Italy was being written off. Its hopelessly chaotic politics, and a nightmare social anarchy in which top businessmen and even a former prime minister were being mown down by the Red Brigades, was the despair of Europe.

Books on the subject became a flourishing corner of the publishing business. For example, in 1975 John Earle, a Rome correspondent of *The Times*, concluded in his book *Italy in the 1970s* that the country's position was possibly irretrievable. "The most cursory glance suggests that the motive forces in the national life have lost way and that the movement is

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HIGHLIGHTS

downhill. At any moment, the situation might explode. It is one that is complex and difficult to follow, although Europe may have to be prepared to live with an EEC member state that is at best in permanent confusion."

The Italians have been making such experts eat their hats. In recent years inflation has been reined back from 22 per cent to a sedate 4 per cent, and cash-rich Italy is investing so much abroad that the French have begun to complain about the wave of take-overs as the "Italian invasion".

The race is on to dominate the European marketplace. Italy's factories now sell more goods worldwide than does British industry, and these are not goods like pasta, wine or even shoes. For the most part they are high technology products and sophisticated engineering of the sort that used to be labelled "Made in Britain". In highly profitable "white goods" like washing machines and refrigerators, Italy towers head and shoulders above the competition,

producing about 40 per cent of all Europe's output, or twice as much as any other country.

The coming revolution in satellite television broadcasting will be dominated by Italians like Silvio Berlusconi, while in areas like advanced avionics Italian defence contractors like Selenia are making a name for themselves.

Back in my first-class compartment on the Firenze-Milano express, my friend the Italian finance expert has just about exhausted his stock of economic statistics. As our train snakes its way into the florid central station that Benito Mussolini must surely have built, my companion produces a final figure that is wholly Italianate in character.

"Even on paper we look good compared to Britain," he says, "and that's just the official figures for Gross Domestic Product. You've got to add about 25 per cent to that for the *mondo sommerso*. You know, the famous Italian black economy." ○

—GILES MERRITT

BOOKS

Christmas rip-off

THE FESTIVE season is a lucrative time for booksellers, but the biggest slice of the cake goes not to Booker Prize winners, not to academic exposés, but to the "funnies".

This Christmas you are likely to find yourself confronted by a massive glitzy display of anything up to 200 different titles, with prices ranging from £2 to £20. The target readership, publishers freely admit, are people who would not normally buy books. The reasoning is that stuck for a stocking-filler, the public should have to look no farther than the local W. H. Smith—so in two short years the label "humour" has become synonymous with "novelty gift".

Chief offenders in this respect are the endless (and usually overpriced) TV spin-offs. This year we have *Spitting Images*, Phil Cool's *Cool's Out*, Victoria Wood's *Barmy* and Jimmy Cricket's *Come 'ere—there's more!*. Last Christmas's smash hit was *How to be a Complete Bastard* by Ade Edmondson of *The Young Ones* fame, a book which has sold a staggering 300,000 copies. This year's follow-up, *How to be a Complete Bitch* by former *Not the*

Nine O'Clock News hostess Pamela Stephenson, entered the *Sunday Times* best-seller list at number six on release and looks like having the same success.

Among other yuletide wallet-lighteners the emphasis this year is firmly on sex. The latest in the line of *Man's Best Friend* books, *Wicked Willie's Lowdown on Men*, concerning the adventures of a talking phallus, is even cruder than its predecessors and is expected to do exceptionally well. One old favourite *101 Uses of a Dead Cat* has become, in AIDS-conscious 1987, *101 Uses of a Condom*. As well as encapsulating what makes British humour grate, the comic-books represent the ultimate in throwaway consumerism.

But before you turn your back on those displays altogether, there are some signs of genuine wit among the smutty innuendo. Ivor Cutler's delightful *Fremley* is a beautifully illustrated tale of Scottish family life. Also recommended is Alexei Sayle's *Geoffrey the Tube Train and the Fat Comedian*, perhaps the funniest book to come out of the alternative-comedy explosion ○

—ROGER SABIN



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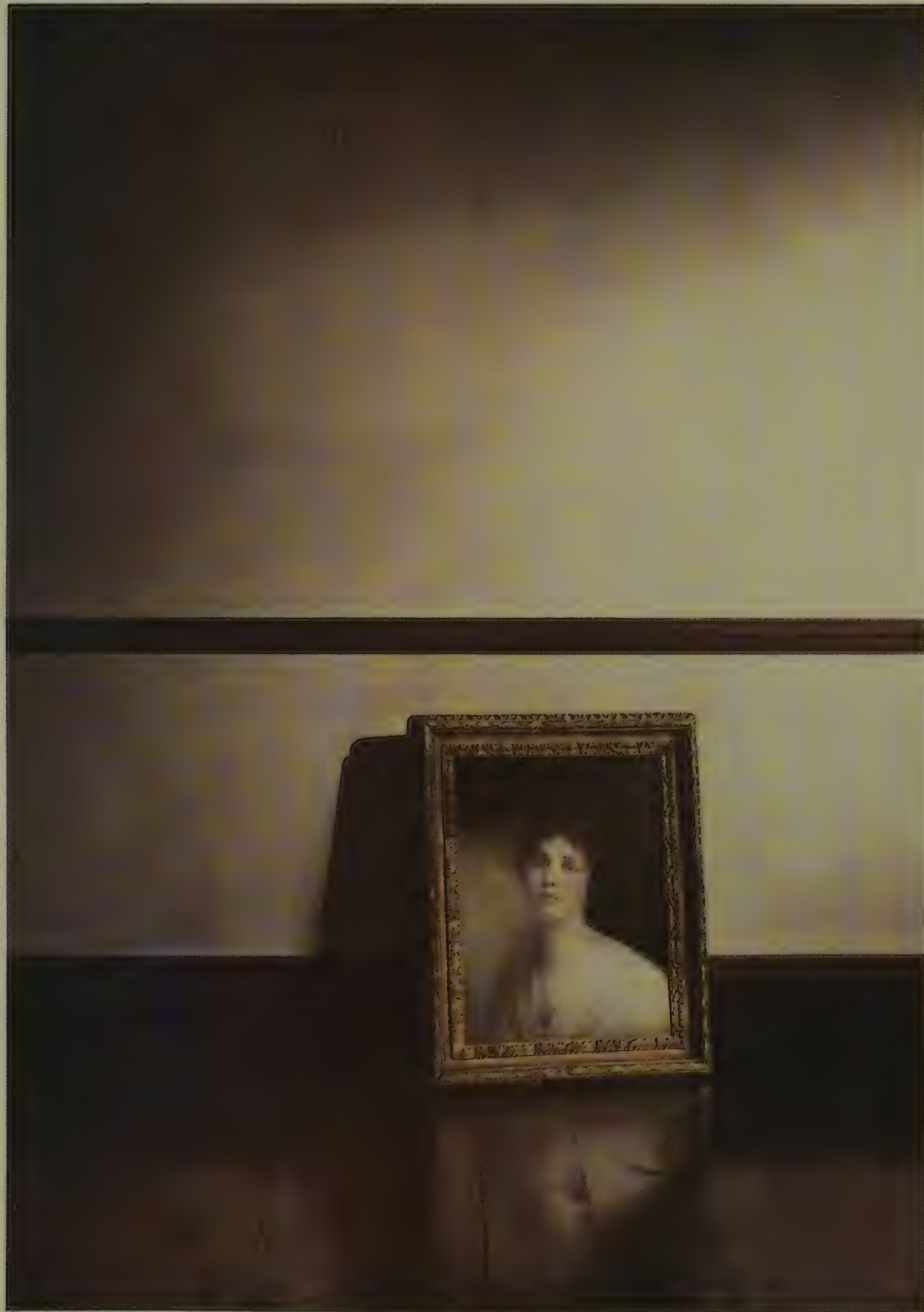


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ALL TINSEL AND NO TALENT

By Nicholas de Jongh. Photographs by Donald Cooper

LOOK AT the West End theatre now, and find it a creaky, nostalgic pleasure-dome, fashioned primarily with American tourists in mind and as a try-out home for musicals on the way to Broadway. *Me and My Girl*, "the Lambeth Walk musical" at the Adelphi, has already made it huge in Broadway where the *déjà-vu* of bygone English class and manners send middle-aged, out-of-town New Yorkers wild with excitement.

Musicals are indeed the taste and sound of our escapist, West End times. There are 12 more of them glittering dutifully—from *42nd Street*, the four-year-old affair at Drury Lane which has its heart in the film of the 1930s and its mind in fairyland, to *High Society* at the Victoria Palace, which may call back the Grace Kelly movie of the 1950s. In between two transatlantic icons of forget-me-not, stands *Follies*, Stephen Sondheim's Ovaltine and Sanatogen pick-me-up for an older generation which doesn't get picked up any more and dreams of a past where chorus girls were still in their prime and in other people's arms. Of plot, the little that there is soon submerged in nostalgia's heavy balm.

Yet if we look for the aptest symbol of the West End we need go no further than Agatha Christie, forever England the fortnight before yesterday, still setting her *Mousetrap* nightly as she has these last 35 years, for audiences which looked, at my last visit, as if they were hard

pressed to comprehend the goings-on at all. Half a mile away the long-limbed *No Sex Please. We're British*, which lured in innocent foreigners to hear what they believed about the chaste and unchased Anglo-Saxons, has at last gone the way of all theatrical flesh, only to be replaced by *When Did You Last See Your Trousers?*, a farce which has little more to it than the title. The one West End play to bite deep and hard, *Serious Money*, with its attack upon the low ways of high finance, began life at the subsidized Royal Court and was transferred to make money of the serious sort for the Court. It is now nightly watched over by braying young City types, thrilled to see themselves made theatrical whatever the cost.

Whatever happened to the West End, you may ask? Wasn't it once a place which did not feed on tourists, and was spurred at times by a spirit of adventure? Michael White, the daring theatrical producer whose first production and whose first flop coincided, more than a quarter of a century ago, when he presented *The Connection*—a delirious troupe of drug addicts waiting to fix themselves a mainline to bliss—glumly agrees: "The whole world now seems to be tourists going around. If the planes suddenly stopped, West End theatre would collapse."

In a sense he is right. Which theatre manager can forget the summer of 1986 after the Prime Minister had authorized the American president to use its bases in Britain to launch its attack upon Libya? American tourists, fearful that the whole of Britain, or at least London, would become a hiding place for retaliatory Libyan bombs, stayed away in their thousands. Suddenly the West End theatre was full of empty seats and panicking impresarios.

Those who look back two decades are not being rosy-eyed when they say that the West End was once a different, more dynamic place. In June, 1960, at the Comedy, without benefit of a single star, was an adaptation of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*; at the Criterion a dramatization of the flirtatious letters which lavishly passed between George Bernard Shaw and Mrs Patrick Campbell; at the Duchess a young man, described as "tomorrow's lead" by the theatre magazine *Plays and Players*, named Alan Bates, was starring with Donald Pleasence in young Harold Pinter's play *The Caretaker*; another rising young writer, Robert Bolt, had turned Thomas More into *A Man for*



Follies: 'Dreams of a past where chorus girls were in their prime and other people's arms'

Natasha Richardson and Stephen Roe, far left, glittering in *High Society*'s early days

All Seasons, on show at the Globe; at the Haymarket, Aunt Edna's long-standing delight, Terence Rattigan, had taken a turn towards the closet to bring out *Lawrence of Arabia* as a homosexual sado-masochist in his play *Ross*, with Alec Guinness playing the man himself. At the huge Piccadilly, Michael Denison and Dulcie Gray were reviving Shaw's *Candida*; the Lunts were over in England to open the *Royalty* with a scathing satire on wealth by Friedrich Dürrenmatt; Flora Robson was giving one of the performances of her life at the Queen's in the Henry James adaptation of *The Aspern Papers* and where *Follies* now reigns was a straight piece about American misfits. In all there were some 14 serious plays in the West End and a generous sprinkling of musicals.

Of course, in those days there was no real subsidized theatre—no National or Royal Shakespeare Company. But there were other crucial differences as well. To understand why the West End then was so much more exciting than now, and so infinitely more varied and challenging, we need to comprehend the nature of a complex series of changes.

First and foremost is the fact of theatrical economics. "Economically it's so much tougher than 20 years ago. If you had a smash you could make a fortune," says Robert Fox, who 20 years ago was just a teenager but now ranks as one of the few youthful impresarios to put a little true dazzle into the West End. At the moment he has Maggie Smith doing amazing things with her long hands in *Lettice and Lovage* and Albert Finney, eagerly expected in Ronald Harwood's new play *J. J. Farr*. For Fox still has faith in new plays and is surprised to find them: "Nowadays, you can't afford to take a risk. You have to think incredibly hard before you put on any play at all. Today it costs anything between a minimum of £130,000 and £200,000." And producers are looking for the smallest possible casts for straight dramas and one set without expensive glitter. What is more, you do, these days, need the prospect of a major run if you are to recoup your outlay, let alone your profits. "If you start from scratch," Fox estimates, "you need six months of good business, and at least four months to break even."

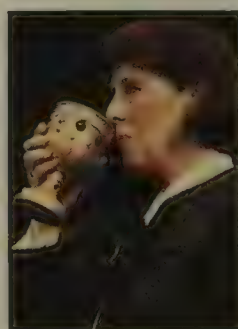
And who wants merely to break even? That is the requisite, or was once, of the state-subsidized companies. Roughly speaking you need, Fox calculates, to keep your West End theatre 70 per cent full to be making any money at all, and 45 to 60 per cent to be breaking even. The theatre owners have get-out clauses, too, by which they are able swiftly to eject a producer if his production falls in the course of a week or a fortnight beneath a certain percentage of capacity. These economic facts mean that producers who mount straight plays are eager for the relative security that a major star provides. But Fox says that he has been exceptionally fortunate to contract Maggie Smith for nine months and Albert Finney for six.

For stars, these days, do not like to stay long in the theatre. Michael Reddington, the producer who is presenting John Gielgud, has to face the business of balancing his books for a production in which the 83-year-old star will not remain with the play—due in London in February—for more than eight weeks. Even with a cast of three, this is apparently proving a daunting proposition.

So the producers' anxiety syndrome, the condition in which they are found to be desperately seeking stars for more than three



Lettice and Lovage: 'Impresario Robert Fox has Maggie Smith doing amazing things'



months, is today's constant, as far as straight plays are concerned. In the 1950s and 1960s there was a large troupe of true star theatre players, all of whom had box-office allure and who wished to appear in serious work. They would, within reason, tour, and they would agree to at least a six- or nine-month contract. And since the economics of play production were different, there were producers who would and could afford to temper one staggering success with one or two worthwhile productions. There would be no real losses. As a result the West End was kept vibrant, financed by producers who found it relatively easy to make money and profits. "It's all economics now—finding the right product is so difficult. I've had a terrible year," mourns Michael Codron, the producer who in the last three decades has the most impressive record for finding and encouraging new playwrights. It was he who first hazarded his money with Harold Pinter, and presented Pinter's early play *The Birthday Party*, which lasted no more than a few nights in 1958.

Now, though, as Fox indirectly concedes, the great generation of knights and dames has almost passed away. Television and cinema offer the main attractions. For a profession fighting against impermanence and insecurity, the screen and the money paid out offer the chance of shoring up lucre against the ravage of old age, illness or even a fall from favour. A star in the West End may these days make an average of about £2,000 a week or some such fixed sum, which will be set against a percentage of box-office takings. This percentage is less, normally, than 10 per cent, but if the play is a sell-out you can make a lot more.

This sounds serious money and it is. But the

rewards on the television screen and from the cinema are greater, far greater. There is no fierce schedule which requires of you eight performances a week, and all that this entails in terms of sheer nerve and memory; filming is a suitable occupation for old-age pensioners, since it puts so little strain upon the mind, at least compared with watching theatre-acting. And the middle-aged generation of theatre stars is not so devoted to the stage, and no wonder; they want short seasons of theatre, and the subsidized stage provides them.

Fox also concedes that whereas people go on trust to the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company's Barbican Theatre and the Royal Court, they do not have the same faith in today's West End producers, nor are West End theatres comfortable, alluring places. In the 1950s the great H. M. Tennent management, with its stable of stars and opulent revivals, did have such an audience seal of approval. The likes of Codron, Fox and White can hope for no such loyalty.

Fox, as befits his age, looks to alternative attractions available beside the theatre in an age of video. He refuses altogether to accept that the young are largely absent from the commercial theatre—why, he sees them at *Chess*! Yet he agrees that our Victorian and Edwardian theatres—"a bloody good investment in real estate"—are not as well looked after by their owners as they should be, since these money men "who take an unfair amount of the wealth from production" are interested in money alone.

But Michael White, who has for the moment turned his back upon the West End and gone into films, does not attribute the difficulties for the producers of straight plays only to simple economics and the national companies. "The reason that producers make safe choices has to do with the growth of the small subsidized theatres (like the Bush and Hampstead and the Theatre Upstairs)." If these little places skim off the best of the new and original, how can the West End producer compete? Better then that they go for nostalgia, for the charabancs and those tourists, not to mention America?

Broadway is in a sense the producer's great white hope. Over there production costs have soared even more dramatically and drastically than in the West End. Powerful trade unionists have sucked dry even the stingiest money-hording American producers; with a series of restrictive practice settlements and deals they have ensured that the average American producing corporation, and they are all pretty average, can contemplate only the major smash musicals. Such productions may cost millions of dollars, but they tend to appeal to the old, rich Broadway-goers who can afford to fling away £150 away for nights which bring back their ancient yesterdays and send arthritic feet tapping to the familiar tunes of Lloyd Webber.

For Americans have taken to English theatre—the lighter the better, though even *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* will do. Broadway is thus becoming an English colony; the straight play offers too many risks and is virtually exiled. Fill the place with musicals, therefore. *Follies*, which flopped so resoundingly over there in the 1970s, now looks set to return, transformed and with the accolade of its English revival and reception to give that special, dazzling allure of "approved by genuine Anglo Saxons".

What, then, can be done to deal with the West End to ensure that it does not stifle itself in



Serious Money, attacking City wheeler-dealers, is deservedly making money of the serious sort for the Royal Court, which transferred it to the West End

elderly nostalgia, that it does not blind itself with glitter and what may turn out to be self-abuse? The time could be, just a year or two ahead, when there is almost nothing but the sound of music emanating from Shaftesbury Avenue and points beyond, while the subsidized houses are left to serious things.

Playwright David Hare takes a pessimistic view: "It has been so long since the West End had anything to do with the life of the country (except for the plays Michael Codron sometimes puts on) that I rarely think of it. It is entirely tourist-oriented, abandoned by the regular theatre-going public who now go to regional and subsidized theatre. It has been destroyed by the mindlessness of musicals, as well. I went to *The Phantom of the Opera* and the atmosphere was sinister—it was clear that the musical was disliked by nine-tenths of the audience but they knew it was supposed to be good and they gave it an ovation at the end—a perfect example of what Peter Brook calls 'dead theatre'. Nothing happens."

The Royalty theatre, which recently turned away the television cameras, and launched itself as a repertory house for plays, is an omen of the state of things. Its production of Graham Greene's play *The Living Room* ought to have drawn the town. Even looked upon crudely as an exposé of adultery, teenage love, Catholic guilt and doom, it surely had sufficient appeal. Mr Greene, after all, is not without his followers. But *The Living Room*, a success in the 50s, is today proof that you need something else—major stars or meretricious novelties.

Prosperity is not enough. Michael Codron is the first to admit it: "The quality's poor in the West End." But if serious producers seriously wring their hands, they provide no hope of

change; they rely on the oldest four-letter word of all—hope. Something may turn up. There has been talk of creating an off-West End system in the West End—an equivalent of "off-Broadway" where the Equity union rates would be greatly reduced. But that will not make any great difference. It would be possible to turn two or three small houses—the Ambassadors, the Duchess and the Fortune—into our own off-Broadway, but I will hazard that they would teem with revues, musical anthologies and other unalluring oddments which were too large for the big theatres and too bad to be taken on by the subsidized sector.

What we need for the West End is a proper

Theatrical Investment Fund, not like the timid multifarious thing we have today. It would be financed by those great institutions which feed so greedily from the theatre, taking its dramatists and its ideas. The BBC, the independent television companies and the few surviving film corporations could each contribute £100,000 to such a fund. It would be supplemented from a small, fixed, agreed proportion of those West End profits to which some serious altruistic producer would be prepared to contribute.

If it takes an average of £150,000 to present a serious play in the West End, then the aim should be to produce 12 such productions a year. The Fund's trustees, a gathering of the theatrical great and good, could scrutinize all propositions placed before them and offer to finance in whole or part those play productions which they were convinced would not otherwise come to life. Any profits would go back in part, but not in whole, to the original producer, but in part also to subsidize failures.

I do not argue that the right to fail is essential for the commercial theatre, but if the West End theatre survives on prosperity alone then it will continue to hustle for the unexceptional, the familiar and the conventional. If theatrical production is an eternal gamble to gauge public interest in advance, then that gamble should be tempered by the realization that yesterday's theatrical catastrophe can turn out to be tomorrow's gold mine. To go back to Pinter—let us remember again that *The Birthday Party* lasted a few nights only. And the work of Alan Ayckbourn, for whom the sky has not been the limit these last 10 years, was first seen in London at the tiny Arts theatre. There is a commercial message there as well as timely theatrical moral ○

BRITISH THEATRE ASSOCIATION



Ross: 'It is not being rosy-eyed to say that 20 years ago the West End was more dynamic'

CRYING ALL THE WAY FROM THE BANK

The predicted shake-out of high earners in the City has been hastened by the stock market crash. Geraldine Bedell discovers where the axe is falling and how bankers and stockbrokers cope with instant dismissal

IN ONE week this autumn Andrew Wilson lost his roof, a quarter of his assets and his job. The roof on his £350,000 Islington house crashed down in Britain's most violent hurricane in 300 years. The assets, all promisingly invested in UK and American equities, plummeted in the worst stock market crash this century. And his job was axed by a bank desperately searching for a solution to problems of low profits and lost role.

It was a black week for the rich and even for some of the moderately well-off: for Andrew Wilson it was like something out of *King Lear*, with the elements and fortune all against him. But though the axed job came with a kind of symbolic appropriateness at the same time as the storm and the convulsions on the stock exchange, it was a different category of disaster. Where they were instant, widespread dramas, the job was a private affair. Hardly anyone, except his wife, three children and a few friends, noticed that Andrew Wilson was out of work. In the City's champagne bars young men have continued to carouse. They have gone on giving gold Rolexes to their girlfriends for birthday presents, and talking aggressively in their dealing rooms about hiring and firing and how they want to be rewarded for performance.

Such confidence may not be long-lived. The markets which the banks had hoped would come good for them following the Big Bang have failed, and for a Euro-bond trader performance may no longer be possible. The private disasters of Andrew Wilson and the others who were sacked from his bank in that wild October week were not isolated incidents. Those who work in the City know that more redundancies are inevitable, and though the carousing goes on, already a note of hysteria has crept in. "It's fine until you know someone who's been sacked," one bond salesman said. "Once your friends are touring the head-hunters you realize that it could happen to anyone." The City is heading for a shake-out, and this

time it won't be just bits of paper that fall in value, but livelihoods.

Andrew Wilson is not over-sanguine about his chances of re-employment in banking: "The City is contracting and can't take up the slack. At the moment I don't know what I'll do. The head-hunters are telling me I might be better off than some of the younger ones (he is 35) but that remains to be seen. When you don't expect to lose your job you don't make plans." He does not really want to work outside the City: he has been there ever since he left university (Bristol, where he read economics) and he has got used to his £50,000 a year plus bonus, subsidized mortgage, company BMW and social cachet. His wife would rather be married to a merchant banker than the finance director of a widget manufacturer.

Andrew Wilson is not his real name—like the other people who agreed to talk about their redundancies, he is anxious not to make waves

either with the former employers on whose references his future largely depends, or with head-hunters and prospective employers. He feels very bitter that the rules of this particular game were never fully explained: "I'd been there 11 years and it had always seemed a very paternalistic organization. Of course there was the usual talk about getting rid of you if you didn't perform, but you always felt this was just City machismo: no one actually believed the rhetoric. They didn't sack people; the atmosphere was civilized. The day I left I found a grown man crying in the lavatories. He said he'd been there sobbing for 10 minutes. And he hadn't lost his job. He just couldn't bear seeing this happening to his friends, and the place."

This autumn Shearson Lehman have sacked 150 people in London, Chemical Bank 170, Salomon Brothers 150 and Orion Bank 150. These were the high-profile clearouts, where whole Eurobond and gilts departments dis-

appeared overnight. But they were not the only ones: others received less attention either because the numbers involved were smaller—Saudi International Bank sacked 31 people, 10 per cent of its staff—or because they managed things better, with voluntary redundancies phased over months. Many of those who have lost their jobs are the very ones who last year were most in demand.

Laurie Taylor observed recently in these pages that "yuppies" is now so overused a word it has ceased to have any meaning—flung about indiscriminately to describe anyone under 40 and from the south who knows what a Filofax is. But it does have a special usefulness when applied to the City, which in the last couple of years has seen the growth of an entirely new class—the young rich. "Experienced"—that means one or two years in the job—Euro-bond traders were until recently able to demand six-figure salaries, Porsches and golden hellos. Capital markets was the lucrative area of banking to be in, and energy and nerves of steel were at a



The scream of the City stock market (with apologies to Edvard Munch)

premium. The institutions wanting to move into these markets knew success depended on the talent of individual traders, and talent here was equated with youth. Grizzled commercial bankers of 30 and more who saw their traditional activities falling in profitability and status and tried to move in on the new boom areas were told they were too old.

The inflated salaries of these fresh-faced graduates have their roots in the Latin American debt crisis: in the 70s, when the South American debtor nations started to default, their creditor banks suddenly ceased to be gold-plated risks. All at once the major corporates were more secure than banks, and there was no longer any point in multinationals raising money in the old way; investors would rather lend to companies direct. The instrument for that lending was the fixed-rate interest bond, or Eurobond, followed for lesser risks by short-term credits—Eurocommercial paper. Robbed of their traditional role and realizing they had no alternative if they were to survive, the banks moved swiftly to become intermediaries in the placing of the paper.

The massive move into the securitization of debt was aggravated in London by new interest in the City from American and Japanese houses because of the impending Big Bang. Demand for bond experts ran high as institutions recruited madly, bidding up salaries in a frantic attempt to secure a solid position—for it was always known that long term the markets could not accommodate them all.

Despite the proliferation of new ways of packaging debt and all the energy and talent poured into them, the wholesale money markets have proved less profitable than expected. The increased globalization which came with computer technology has meant tougher competition. Banks whose profits may already be hard-pressed because of loan loss provision to Latin America can afford to run departments of highly-paid and not very profitable bond salesmen and traders only for so long.

Some are simply switching off the screens. Others are using the situation as a chance to cut personnel across the board and re-orientate their business entirely.

Edward is 25 and has just been sacked by the bank that took him on as a graduate trainee, sent him to New York and recently promoted him. The Bar had been his first career choice, but he did well at Oxford, where he read history, and in his year the clever and successful almost by definition applied to the City. This was not always the case; 10 years earlier the City had been just another option among advertising, the BBC, firms of city solicitors and the civil service. Now to get a job with a bank was widely regarded as the highest achievement. Banks had graduated into another salary league entirely and undergraduates were busy setting up City societies to make contacts and develop CVs much as they had once set up poetry societies. Edward did the milk round and found himself with a job which not only promised a City salary but training in New York; he turned down his Bar school scholarship and prepared to become a banker.

When rumours started to percolate through the bank about impending redundancies late this year he was concerned, but mainly about the effect it was having on morale. "Things had been going well. I had been demonstrably successful: they'd thrown a lot of different things at me over the four years and I'd always coped. I'd done presentations of complicated products to the senior management, frontline selling and backroom thinking. I'd shown I was flexible and I was in the very area they had decided they had to develop."

The 10 per cent staff cut was made in one hour: those who got telephone calls summoning them upstairs knew they were out. "They said they'd closed the department, here's a letter explaining everything, and there's a man outside who will help you. That was all. The next day I went in to clear my desk and they'd cancelled my security pass. I had to call security,

who had to call personnel, who had to call my head of department before I could get in the front door."

Edward was paid £29,000 a year and ran a Golf GTi on the bank. He considers his redundancy package very fair—he got six months' salary and mortgage subsidy, money for the month's notice he was not required to work, and use of the car for four months or until he gets another job. He is single and doesn't expect to have to change his life dramatically for three months—he goes to the theatre at least once a week, has a very smart flat in Earl's Court, smokes, drinks and rides horses. "After that, if I still haven't got a job I'll have to cut back very significantly. I've already decided not to drink until I get another job, but at the moment that's more about addiction than money."

When we talked he had been out of work less than a week and was still visibly shaken. He was determined to be bullish about his chances of re-employment, but knew he would have to look beyond the City to be sure of getting something. The final betrayal has made him retrospectively angry about the whole of his brief career: "They always messed me about, moving me from job to job. There was no planning of a young career. A year ago the head of personnel said he was worried about the shape of my internal CV and with the next move things would be better. And this is what happened."

He has not found it too difficult telling his friends; he was always determined to believe, and to have everyone else believe, it could have happened to anyone. "Of course you feel rejection and humiliation. You imagine people are thinking, 'He's one of the dunces who got sacked.' However irrational you know it is, the impulse to see yourself as a failure is still there." He is angry with himself for not having been more cynical; he imagined because they had hand-picked and trained him at considerable expense he might be one of those they would

The brutal job of dismissal

OVER THE last two years many euphemisms have been deployed in the City for dismissal: release, liberation, outplacement are three which have rather more positive, or at least more neutral overtones than the sack. But however managers try to disguise the action of dismissal, it is still the sack and still the most painful part of their jobs.

There was a time, before the Big Bang, when people were relieved of their posts in a generally more sensitive way. A senior executive at a bank who had not been pulling his weight would be taken out to lunch by his manager and gently led into a discussion of his role and family life. "I would start talking about his family life and his interests," said a manager who used to specialize in this method. "The victim would probably say that he had too little time to see his wife and children

or to play golf and I would then suggest that this was deplorable and that something ought to be arranged. I would ask whether he could see himself working for just a day or two each week, or whether he would like to come into the bank infrequently as an adviser. I'd assure him there would be no financial trouble and suggest he go and discuss it all with his wife. The point was that much of the solution was supplied by the victim."

Today, the method is far less gentlemanly but also, in the eyes of the managers, far more honest. "There is no point in beating about the bush, especially when you have got, say, 20 people to deal with in the same day," said the managing director of an investment trust. "Most people have second sight when it comes to getting the push. It may not come entirely as a shock because

the dismissal will often have been preceded by a series of unsatisfactory meetings in which the individual's past performance becomes obvious to him. You have to say, 'This can't go on. We have reached the end of the road with you.'"

His method is to arrange the dismissal on Friday nights so that the employee does not return after the weekend. He also finds it expedient to arrange severance terms and details about cheap mortgages and office cars while the victim is still in shock.

In the revolution of the City last year, many people's salaries and commissions rose by legendary proportions, matching in some instances the vast sums earned on Wall Street. What these people did not fully realize was the precariousness of their wealth: while the City had imported American incentives and salaries it had also absorbed ruthless American attitudes to dismissal. With some firms

expecting to lose as much as 50 per cent of their income as a result of the crash, the high-earning employees who had been wooed, flattered and liberally rewarded a year ago may now be regarded as expensive overheads. They are being cut with ruthless speed.

The companies which are in the process of "liberating" large numbers of their employees often have to consult head office in New York. "This is an important consideration now because it is possible that people may get to hear of their dismissal unofficially while the discussion is going on between New York and London." This can lead to problems because the intended victims make it much more difficult for the employer to stay on top of the situation. He is also likely to obtain far greater compensation from his firm because he enters the dismissal meeting with a specific objective and he may have been advised by a solicitor ○

—SIMON BEECH

Life after sudden death

THE CITY is about to "shake out". It will be sifting the finest from the fattest, casting aside all undesirable lumps. A brochure for a two-day conference in London in November, entitled *Rationalization & Restructuring of Personnel in the City*, called on companies to "prepare for the shake-out". No doubt the shaking will be messy—we are not good at personnel management in the UK—but one man's redundancy can mean another's employment.

John Hall has been recycling "disposable" executives since 1983. A partner in Peat Marwick McLintock—with 9,000 employees the largest firm of accountants in the UK—he is head of career counselling in what the company calls its "human resources division". He and his team of five consultants take on clients who are sponsored by their former employers—Abbey National, Kleinwort Benson and Barclays are among his customers. Passing the unwanted soul on to McLintock's helps salve the conscience. According to one customer,

"McLintock's are the best in the market place. They have a very high regard for the integrity of the individual involved."

The notion of selling counselling is entirely John Hall's. To date he has not failed with any clients; they have all found new jobs, often in very different fields from those they were used to.

Let us take a typical example and call him Tom. For the past 15 years the now middle-aged Tom has been a financial controller for a firm in the City and now earns £35,000. His seniors decide he has to go. He may have stagnated, becoming inflexible and frustrating for others to work with; new technology may not suit him; whatever the reason, Tom must go.

The dismissal, however tactfully done, will be a shock. When Tom arrives in John Hall's office near St Paul's he may be bitter, depressed and most likely sceptical about this counselling lark suggested by his former colleagues. Although Hall likes to stick to "counselling" his consultants use the American term "out-placement"—a person is not



Executive recycling expert Hall: "Never do a termination on a Friday"

sacked, fired or given the push but placed outside the company in caring hands.

British companies are pretty bad at dealing with redundancy. One of Hall's consultants, Bill Pitcher, reports that only 10 per cent of firms have adequate personnel structures and even fewer are any good at managing them. Which is why poor Tom is feeling wretched. But if Hall was called in before the sacking the former financial controller could be feeling better than most. "We never,

ever do a termination on a Friday," says Hall. If it happens on a Thursday Tom will have to get up the next morning, find a tie to match his shirt, and travel to central London as he would any other working day. On arrival at McLintock's he finds a ready-made office at his disposal. At a time when the outcast is feeling most like an outcast, the sense of his own importance is drummed in to him relentlessly.

Hall is tough but fair, like the best of headmasters. He is

want to keep. "At the time and just after I felt slightly sick. I wasn't going to burst into tears—I just felt stunned. I went home in the middle of the afternoon and I wrote a list of all the good things, had a bath and went out. The next day was much more traumatic with all this bother about the security. I packed four years' work into four boxes, someone helped me down to the car, and I drove away."

Head-hunters on the whole had been sympathetic—"Only one lot laughed at me". He would like to stay in the City, and thinks he has a better chance than some because he's a generalist, but he is less than confident that there will be room for him.

The Press and public have long had an ambivalent attitude to the young rich City élite. On the one hand there has been (sometimes grudging) admiration for their energy and enthusiasm and high spirits; the advertisers have naturally courted and flattered them, implying theirs is the most highly desirable of states. On the other there has been derision for their callowness and distaste for their arrogance and insularity. One head-hunter who must have made a fortune from placing young bankers this time last year reviewed almost with relish the prospect of yuppies getting their come-uppance now. It must have been galling for many to see the young able to dictate their own extravagant terms when they did not even have school fees to pay.

That arrogance which has characterized the City of late and aroused such hostility is unlikely to disappear now; no one believes the square mile will ever revert to the civilized, gentlemanly and rather sleepy place it was before deregulation and the arrival of the foreigners. "We're likely to see an eventual

clean-out of those who want a comfortable and not too frightening existence," said one head-hunter. "Those that remain will be the ones who are happy with the ethos of the City. But they will expect to be well paid to compensate for the unstable environment."

Top head-hunters Russell Reynolds are recommending fund management as a possible option for the sacked financiers on their books. Their consultant Giles Crewdson draws a parallel with New York, where since competition slashed commissions on sales and trading, he says the positions of clout have moved over to the men and women who manage the investments. Regardless of fluctuations he thinks investment management will remain a lively area of activity, and much more secure than fighting for a slice of a smaller and smaller trading and sales cake.

But he warns that those moving over will have to accept severe salary cuts, and not everyone will be eligible. "People will have to demonstrate maturity, which hasn't been the case in sales and trading," he says. "They will have to accept lower salaries, and it may take a bit of time for expectations to come back down to earth. People in the City have become extremely arrogant."

Already Crewdson says he has seen a subtle shift in attitudes to money among those who are out of work. Where formerly the size of salary was sole criterion of a good job (and to some extent of social acceptability) now there are wider concerns. Those who have been made redundant once certainly do not want a repeat performance. "People are generally much keener to look at the business—is it well capitalized, will I be secure? Money is necessarily important—a lot of these people have con-

siderable commitments—but it's no longer the sole driving force." It is not quite the same as a revaluation of the caring professions, but it is certainly a move away from the short-term materialism of last year.

Angela was the most senior woman in her bank before she was sacked. She had worked her way up the hard way, leaving her job as a librarian in a merchant bank in Australia when they would not train her for management, moving to London and taking a job as a research assistant just to get through the door. Her employers had appeared to shower her with rewards—a training course in New York last year and promotion in July, just three months before presenting her with her P45.

Angela is 34, single and tough. She is determined not to be cowed and though she is looking in the City—"naturally I'd like to stay; the City is where many of the brightest people are and for those who survive there are great rewards"—if she cannot get what she wants she is fully prepared to make a clean break and go back to Australia.

What offends her most is the arbitrariness of the decision: "They said, 'we had to chop and unfortunately you were in one of the desks'. It seems very unfair—it's one thing to be sacked because you're hopeless, quite another because you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. You feel such a victim."

She has been using the offices and services of a consultancy which specializes in helping and placing what they prefer to call severed executives. They persuaded Angela to present herself very aggressively to her prospective employers. "I took them my CV and they said why start this conventional way, with education and early jobs? We decided I should be very

paternalistic and a good listener, but there is no room in his school for the idle and little time for self-pity. Clients refer to being "kicked up the bum" when necessary. But that is not often and Hall goes about jolly-faced, with that ability to talk seriously and smile widely at the same time. Fifty-six and married with four daughters, he claims to be dominated by women. Perhaps that's why he is so good at dealing with men.

So Tom finds a perfect "boss" when he arrives at "work". He wants for nothing—desk, personal telephone, computers, business magazines, reference library and other people in the same situation. Hall will become his friend and adviser.

First, Tom will talk to John or another consultant for a couple of hours. He will have investment, tax and pension consultations with experts, so that his financial position can be assessed. Do senior executives need such advice? Apparently so; having everything spelt out helps Tom accept his new position.

For the first few weeks of the course the emphasis is on self-analysis. Tom may be asked to

write a lengthy essay about himself, probably the hardest thing he will have to do but the most beneficial, as it will help him to compose a CV. To make life easier at home—Tom has the right of refusal—his wife may be invited to participate in discussions.

While Tom is busy discovering himself, John Hall will be paying a visit to Tom's former employers where he will talk about Tom with old colleagues. No secrets allowed in this game; the truth will be revealed. Tom may be excellent at chairing meetings, useless at sorting out disgruntled underlings; he may have BO, but has anyone ever told him? It is a general failing of British companies not to tell people when they are performing brilliantly or badly. People know little of their own strengths and weaknesses at work.

Tom's course is open-ended; he may be with McIntock's for two months or a year. Hall keeps his clients until they find a suitable job, although he reserves the right to cancel the commitment after one year. That has not happened yet and he hopes it never will. Turnover is obviously essential—this is, after all, a firm of account-

ants. McIntock's will charge the sponsor 15 per cent of the client's pay plus £1,000. So to thank Tom for 15 years' loyal service, his employers will pay £6,250.

As well as writing about himself Tom will be asked to come up with six career options. Why six? There seems no rational explanation but Hall argues that it is often in the difficult pursuit of a sixth and final option that the client turns up trumps. All of those six options must satisfy two requirements. Tom must enjoy the type of work involved *and* be good at it.

In pursuing each of his options Tom will be encouraged to get out of his tailor-made office. He must discover the secrets of the hidden job market—15 years in a job teaches you nothing about how to get another one. He must make contacts by telephone, write good strong letters to companies that interest him, talk to people about the different kinds of work available and master the techniques of interviewing with the aid of closed-circuit television. Tom may decide at the end of it all that he still wants to be a financial controller but may move into a completely different field. Whatever the

outcome, it is *his* decision, the job at the end of it *his* discovery.

McIntock's also deal with groups of redundant employees as well as individuals. These groups include younger people who are the victims of another purpose-built term, "down-sizing"—manpower reduction which may occur as a result of financial crisis or computer technology.

Down-sizing comprises four aspects. First, cost reduction: McIntock's have the financial wizardry to dissect company accounts. Second, planning the redundancies—who goes when. Third, out-placement/career counselling. And fourth, tending to the survivors who have lost colleagues. Low morale means lower performance. Few companies get to grips with this problem.

McIntock's human resources division is fast expanding and it should grow even faster in the light of recent developments. Let's just hope they stick to good English words like "counselling". What with "shake out", "out-placement", and "down-sizing", a whole new language is invading the wicked world of personnel ○

—SALLY RICHARDSON

upfront—start with a brief description of what kind of banker I am and one or two things I'm really good at."

Angela is realistic about why she was sacked: "The clients I was calling on were seeing 150 to 200 other banks. Not everyone can make money in a situation like that." That does not stop her feeling betrayed. "It does shake you. You just feel numbed at first. Until the last few months, when everyone had felt this was coming, I'd been very happy with my career. It shows you can't afford to feel too secure just because you're on the high-flier list. I had shown a certain level of commitment and I'd hoped that would count for something."

She also thinks her employers have made a stupid tactical error. "Because I was the senior woman I was a sort of mentor for the young graduates coming in. That was a lot of goodwill they've thrown away." She thinks for women—still sensitive to any hint of discrimination—the bank will be a less attractive prospect than formerly and the good graduates, the ones in a position to choose, may perhaps think twice about a place which promotes its top woman one month and sacks her three months later.

Angela's family is rich and she owns an £85,000 flat in Hampstead. Money is not a real, certainly not an immediate, problem. "I'm a survivor and I know I can keep myself." But she is wholly committed to a career—she has already changed continents for it once and she is active in women's networking groups—and it is galling not having a high-status, demanding job to get up for in the mornings, or £30,000 a year in recognition of her talents.

Money is a more central issue for Tim, now 26 and with his first career as a Eurocommer-

cial paper trader already behind him. In his first proper year of work after training he earned his bank \$300,000. Three years later that figure had dropped to just \$40,000—nowhere near to justifying his £50,000-a-year salary and company BMW. Tim was made redundant with a £35,000 pay-off, including a mortgage subsidy (down to 5 per cent) for six months. His mortgage was highly-g geared, and if he fails to get another job with mortgage subsidy in the City or earns much less than his former salary he may have to sell his £135,000 house in Clapham. This would hurt: "Property is more than an investment; it's tangible, a sort of symbol of success—a statement you've arrived." He continues to believe if he can but stretch himself to keep it, it will make money for him in the end. Property, like the stock market a few months ago, seems to have been rising in value for ever.

No one yet knows how or whether the current ructions in the City will affect that great yuppie passion, property; already, though, estate agents have noticed a more cautious attitude in some price ranges. "There's been a distinct slowing down in the £250,000-plus bracket," one Islington agent said, "People seem to be waiting to see what will happen. They certainly aren't throwing around the £300,000 bids as they were, thinking if they can't quite afford it now they'll have made up the difference in capital gains next year." Some analysts predict a drop in the price of country property as yuppies shed second homes; others a fall at the top end of the market as outgoings are curbed in the wake of stock market losses. The optimists predict that there will be continued price rises as spare cash is invested in property rather than shares.

Even though the bond markets have picked up a bit since the shares collapse, Giles Crewdson sees redundancies continuing: "There's a herding instinct in the City. Salomon were quite brave making the first move, but others will follow." What is now quite likely is that out-of-work bond traders will be joined by out-of-work equities people, as the stock market free fall hastens what was probably already an inevitable process.

Before deregulation, jobbers standing next to each other on the stock market floor could make prices broadly favourable to themselves. Today's market makers, separated as much as linked by their telephones and computers and facing much broader competition, can fix things less to their advantage. As margins are squeezed and activity drops, equities dealing rooms might look to some institutions like another sensible place to make cuts.

The pared-down City that will remain after all this faces another sort of problem. Already the most successful institutions represent such concentrations of power, they can move markets single-handedly. In this jungle where pay is profit-related, the weak are carved up and only the ruthless survive to see the big bonuses, there will be a terrible temptation to manipulate markets for personal gain. We have seen too much City scandal already this year to have much faith left in the integrity of financiers. The City is notoriously hard to regulate: outsiders do not understand the products and monitoring is a nightmare. In the old gentlemanly City of 40 or 50 years ago directors of merchant banks were often not paid, on the assumption they would make their money from insider trading. In the cut-throat City of tomorrow, what price honesty? ○



THE PRIEST'S TALE

Henry Porter visits Quentin Montgomery-Wright, the Roman Catholic priest who gave up the Anglican Church for a rural parish in a remote part of Normandy

Photographs by J. E. Pasquier

A VERY small part of Quentin Montgomery-Wright could be said to have returned to Normandy. For his Montgomery ancestors invaded England with William the Conqueror's army. Over 900 years later, Quentin Montgomery-Wright, a voluble Englishman, resides as the parish priest in Chamblac, a Norman village which has gradually disappeared over the centuries, leaving a farm, a château and the church of Notre Dame.

It is a beautiful place in summer, but bleak in winter. The château is shut up and the

countryside appears to be almost totally deserted. Only occasionally is the odd farmer seen cycling along a hedgeless road or nudging late fruit from the top of the apple trees. It is surprising that the Roman Catholic Church believed there to be any sort of congregation here at all, indeed there probably was not until Quentin Montgomery-Wright arrived.

Thirty years ago he hitch-hiked to Chamblac to see what his ecclesiastical masters had chosen for him. He found a church full of gaudy plaster saints and the presbytery, his new home,

in a state that would have deterred a member of the most spartan religious order. The previous incumbent had despaired and let things go: mice teemed over rubbish and a mattress, and the place was strewn with pamphlets about Freudian psychology which l'Abbé was later to learn formed the core of a series of risqué sermons given to the smirking peasantry. With just a hint of satisfaction he lets slip that his predecessor left the priesthood and married a woman in Paris.

It is possible that he came to Chamblac

better equipped, fortified as he was by the upheaval of changing religions. As a young man he had entered the Church of England and been ordained at 24. He served as a curate in a parish north of Euston and then moved to a heavily bombed part of east London. Normally he might have expected to have found a wife and settled in an attractive parish to bring up a family. But in 1944 he left the Anglican Church to be received into the Roman Catholic faith. He spent a miserable two years as a layman and finally entered a seminary at Bayeux. "I always wanted to go to France but I had never intended to move here permanently. You see, when I went to talk to Cardinal Griffin in England he had just suffered a stroke and he could not have been feeling himself. He sent me here for ever."

This breathless history of the priest's conversion and dispatch to France was all conveyed to me within 10 minutes of his collecting me from Bernay station in his Renault. As well as talking fast, he also likes to drive fast which makes life interesting for the passenger, particularly as the high point of his stories, accompanied by a good deal of Gallic gesticulation, always seems to occur when he is overtaking a long juggernaut. We sped through the countryside, l'Abbé talking about local church politics, the Normans, his life as a boy in Cornwall, and the awfulness of modern architecture, all the while adjusting his skull cap and reassuring his poodle in the back seat. We passed a sign to Le Mans and his passenger wondered whether the abbot has another vocation as a racing driver.

Without warning, we turned into a driveway which only he could have negotiated at such speed. Christian was meant to be meeting us but Christian was lurking elsewhere. The priest huffed with exasperation while explaining that Christian was a speechless mongol whom he had taken in on his arrival, saving him from a wretched life on the farm where his parents placed him. Christian did eventually materialize. He is a little strange to look at, with a large protruding lip, but he turned out to be rather engaging, with an appetite for cigarettes, drink and the unbelievably pornographic programmes on French television. Clearly the pair are very fond of each other, although the priest is driven to distraction by Christian's conviction that sugar lumps should be transferred one by one to their original box after every meal.

There is also some slight difficulty over the presbytery telephone which Christian picks up when Monsieur l'Abbé is out. Messages are withheld which means that requests for baptisms, marriages and funerals are sprung on him at the last minute. Because the telephone rings incessantly, he is thinking of buying a portable set to cut down on the lost messages. The first call that evening came from a woman complaining that unquiet spirits were molesting her household. She suspected they had something to do with her father and implied the priest to say a mass for the dead. "This is a very superstitious area, but I see nothing wrong with this sort of superstition. Christ wasn't against superstition. Remember how a woman thought she would be cured just by touching his coat. No, no. Christ wasn't against the superstitions of simple people."

Paris is only two hours away and yet there is much which is unsophisticated, almost medieval, about some of the beliefs in rural Normandy. The priest complained that there

was a good deal of amateurish sorcery practised, which he takes seriously as a manifestation of evil. "But what can you expect? Only the other day I and Christian saw a black mass conducted on television. It was the most sacrilegious thing I have witnessed. Imagine! A black mass in which the host was run along the body of a naked woman. I am telling you it was actually on television."

His beliefs are as strong and uncompromising as those of any man who has celebrated mass in the church of Notre Dame. Today in France they are often considered eccentrically conventional. The church in his diocese is led by a bishop of left-wing tendencies which the priest clearly deplores. He feverishly searched for a newspaper with a caricature of the bishop. When he found it in one of the numerous piles of papers and letters on the ground floor of the presbytery, he hopped from foot to foot with glee. "That has just caught him right; you can see how clever he is—read what it says: 'The Monsignor Gaillot is at the head of every communist demonstration in the diocese.'"

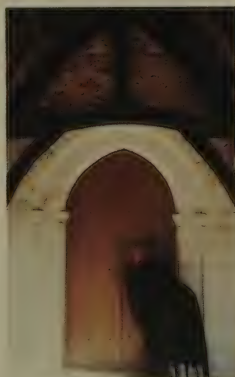
That day l'Abbé had spent a long time at a diocesan meeting expressing his view that the church should become less humanist and the churches themselves should be seen less as meeting places and more as buildings where the most mysterious and sacred events take place. "You know hardly any of these new priests and certainly none of the congregation know how to genuflect towards the altar. They all go into church and bow like Hindus. It's the same when they receive the host. Nowadays they all reach for it with their hands as if they were eating a canapé, which is not at all correct. The priest should always place the host into the communicant's mouth." This was all said with considerable vigour and gesticulation, which temporarily threatened the priest's fingers because he was wielding a tomato slicer at the time. The fingers were saved by the telephone which again caused him to rush out of the kitchen as if he were making an exit from a farce.

His conventionality comes, of course, from his conversion. In his departure from the Church of England, he seems chiefly to have expressed a desire for a more exacting authority. It was not a conversion in the religious sense because as a high-church Anglican he had already embraced the key Roman Catholic doctrines. Part of his complaint is that the church of Rome lost its authority and became weak-kneed when faced with the great social changes of the last 30 years. More important in his eyes is the dilution of the mass and the loss of religious mystery. He objects to the notion that everything should be explicit and pedestrian and, therefore, doggedly continues to say mass in Latin, which is why a great number of people travel far to fill the pews of Notre Dame each Sunday.

I wondered why he found it necessary to convert, if the Church of England was able to accommodate his beliefs. He did not answer the question but instead told me how it happened. "During the war I used to take some young people from the East End down to Mevagissey in Cornwall. On one visit someone was making a film and they asked me to say mass in front of the cameras as part of the plot. I said I was able to but declined because I was a member of the Church of England. But I began to think 'Why not?' Very soon afterwards I decided to tell my vicar but of course I could not tell the parish-



Above, Quentin Montgomery-Wright's parish, although only two hours from Paris, is unspoilt, silent and apparently devoid of people. After 33 years making his rounds from church to church and answering the incessant calls from his parishioners, Monsieur l'Abbé knows every inch of the territory that the Roman Catholic Church quixotically chose for him. He has a strong attachment to this area of Normandy, its religious and secular history and the works of its artists. Right and centre, next to the welfare of his flock, l'Abbé cares most about the fabric of the churches in his parish. He is energetic and inquisitive by nature and is ever vigilant against cracks developing in the roof and walls of the medieval buildings in his charge. Far right, he is an admirer of medieval and late medieval church ornament and sculpture. Here he bears the cross that normally hangs above the altar at Chamblac. The torso and head are medieval; the cross and arms are the result of enthusiastic but amateurish restoration this century. During his tenure he has gradually accumulated works of art that other churches consider irrelevant antiques





Above, Monsieur l'Abbé at the long table in his sitting-room where much of the household and parish business is conducted. The room is lined with bookcases which contain many Catholic treatises, works of literature and a copy of A. A. Milne's Winnie The Pooh. Although an unworshipful man in many ways, the priest has discovered that the collection in the church of Chamblac goes up when he offers alcoholic hospitality after mass. He is gregarious and enjoys both religious and secular celebration. Far left, the priest face-to-face with Christian, his companion of 33 years, an affectionate but largely silent victim of Down's Syndrome. When the priest arrived in his parish he rescued Christian from mental servitude at a local farm. Since then Christian has helped around the presbytery and eased some parts of the priest's tireless routine. Left, the priest says mass in the church at Chamblac. Although a man with a gift for comedy, he is uncompromisingly serious about his faith. One look from his monokled eye during mass is enough to quell any trouble from the children in his congregation

ioners in east London why I was leaving."

It was a brave enough act at the time, particularly as most clergymen's idea of themselves is gained from their office. He also had no money and very little prospect of an income. "I put my last half crown of Anglican pay into the box at Farm Street where I was being received into the Catholic Church. When I came out I met a friend who gave me an envelope with quite a large cheque in it. So, you see, I have always trusted in providence."

Providence has generally provided for Quentin Montgomery-Wright and he is constantly relating how just the right person turns up at the right moment in his life. Only last year he crashed the car that he had just persuaded a garage to buy on the way to giving one of his congregation her last rites. (The priest emphasized that the accident was not his fault: he had skidded on some black ice.) Another car passed the scene just as he was despairing of reaching the woman in time and gave him a lift. Later on, when he was wondering how he was going to pay the repair bill of £1,000, he received some generous donations from the congregation.

Providence is also, of course, about the divine guidance of human destiny and Monsieur l'Abbé must occasionally wonder why he, with all his gregariousness, charm and energy, has been placed in this lonely countryside. Since he is fulfilled by his work in the Chamblac congregation and his great joy and anxiety is the maintenance of the three churches in the three villages incorporated in his parish.

Late on the night that I arrived we went to look up the church of Notre Dame. Walking through the graveyard, a route the priest knows so well he needs no light, he explained that huge granite monuments bedecked with plastic flowers were not his responsibility. "My dear mother, who used to come to stay here every winter, once set about cleaning up the churchyard and threw all those plastic flowers over the wall. Nobody was much pleased."

We entered the sweet-smelling church. The priest genuflected at the point where a boy had burnt the carpet with an incense burner at the previous mass. He was genuinely distressed by this but hurried into the vestry to show me a rail of astonishing vestments: black for funerals, purple for Lent, red for feast days. "Feel this," he said, lifting up the hood of a fading yellow vestment. I did and found the hood was stiff with what seemed to be parchment. "Inside there are the copies of the last laws made by Louis XVI. I don't know why they used them as padding but it dates their manufacture to at least the 18th century."

Back in the aisle, the priest walked rapidly from statue to statue, giving the history of each renovation. They have all replaced the expressions but highly coloured plaster saints that he found there 33 years ago. He recounted how people had given him unwanted statues from other churches and explained how the fine Madonna and Child had been found in pieces all over the church. It had been carved in the 16th century, in a style which is medieval. It is probably contemporary with the building of his house which he knows is very old because during renovation 16th-century coins were released from the wattle-and-daub walls.

At about 11 o'clock that night the 73-year-old priest sat down for his first relaxation of the day. He toyed with some letters he felt he ought to answer, but was drawn to the television set on which Christian was watching a panel of

film reviewers discuss a new release. Suddenly, the priest mimicked the pretentious voice of the individual holding forth. There is much in Quentin Montgomery-Wright that would have assured him success on the stage.

The next morning the priest held mass for the children of the parish. In France, Wednesday mornings are reserved for the religious instruction of junior school children. The arrival of 25 anoraked and anarchic infants at the presbytery was heralded by the appearance of a rosy-faced simpleton, aged about 10 years. He stood solemnly at the end of the refectory table in the kitchen looking completely vacant. I later learnt that some children in the area are born like this because their mothers use an arcane concoction to prevent pregnancy. During mass he stood, together with Christian, myself and a pair of nuns, in the nave, while the rest of the children filed into the choir stalls round the altar.

The priest's control of the unruly progeny of the local farmers was complete. One glance through his monokled was enough to stop any misbehaviour. Only once did a mother intervene to deliver a sharp clip to the ear of her son who was pretending to be a monkey. The priest's surplined helpers obeyed his discreet nods to ring the bells and to produce the Bible and instruments of the communion at the right moment.

It is a common enough scene in France but one suspects that these children's affection for the priest is rare. He spends a great deal of time with them and takes care to hear their first confessions with earnestness. The greater part of the period before the service had been spent listening to a small girl who, try as she might, could find nothing to confess to him.

One wondered where all the children had come from. As we toured the boundaries of the parish later in the day, we passed only two or three people. The area seemed completely lifeless and abandoned. The priest made up for it by a remarkable running commentary on the houses we passed, the trees that had been lost in the storm, fragments of history, anecdotes about the villagers and a brief description of the old pilgrim route from England to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, which once passed through his parish. His knowledge of each and every aspect of his parish is remarkable. Very little has escaped that monokled eye in the last three decades.

Again the momentum of his narrative was matched by the car, which I noticed for the first time carried a small bottle of what I assumed to be holy water on the dashboard and several rosaries in the glove compartment. I hoped vaguely that they would give the priest some protection on his rapid expeditions to Bernay and midnight dashes to dying parishioners.

An outsider is struck by the silence and slow time of his parish and also by its isolation. I mentioned this to the priest as we turned into the driveway of the presbytery and expected him to ignore the implication that his was a lonely job. I imagined that he was going to say that his own was so enjoyable and onerous that he did not have time to think of loneliness, that he was both spiritually and temporally fulfilled. All this is probably true but he did not say it. Instead, he thought for a while and replied, "Yes. I sometimes wonder if it's fair of the church to leave a man to tend for himself out here for years on end. I don't want married priests or anything like, but it is hard."



PRINCE CHARLES: HEIR ABERRANT?

Recent behaviour has shown how much our future sovereign
wants to be his own man. Enoch Powell
suggests that a practising prince makes a perfect king

THE GREAT mistake, in judging the Prince of Wales, is to confuse his position with that of the sovereign. It is a confusion promoted by the unfortunate habit of lumping the sovereign together with the rest of the royal family under the label of "the royals".

The Queen's constitutional position is clear and established. In all her public words and acts she is covered by the advice which her responsible ministers tender to her, which in duty and in logic she cannot decline to accept. Her private opinions and wishes are therefore necessarily private to her in the fullest meaning of the term. Apart from the curious episode last year involving her press secretary, Michael Shea, she has—if a subject may respectfully say so—maintained that constitutional position impeccably, and there was general relief and satisfaction at the complete skill with which, in the context of the recent revolution in Fiji and the Commonwealth Conference, she avoided the pitfalls placed in her path by the ambiguous and indeed unintelligible designation of the British sovereign as the "head of the Commonwealth".

This constitutional situation and duty the monarch shares with no one else. Neither the consort nor any member of the royal family acts or speaks on the responsible advice of ministers. Their words and actions may indeed be tempered and restrained by respect for the position of the sovereign and their more or less close association with her in the public mind. But that is a matter of courtesy, good taste and common sense. Otherwise, with one exception, they are unaffected by the binding logic of a constitutional monarchy.

That one exception is the Prince of Wales as heir apparent. Under God's good providence he will at some future time inherit the constitutional position and duty of his mother. From this it follows that words or actions on his part which would make it appear more difficult for him to act sincerely and candidly on the advice of ministers of any political party when the time comes are inadvisable. There is quite a long, unhappy history of heirs apparent whose behaviour encouraged the belief that upon accession they would send their predecessor's ministers packing. Though the Whigs were signally disappointed in their expectations of "Prinny's" behaviour as regent or as king, they had certainly been given grounds for the miscalculation. We are, happily, separated by the best part of two centuries from those events; but they remain a valid illustration of the limits



The monarch: neither dummy nor automaton

to the freedom of speech and behaviour of the heir apparent of a constitutional monarch.

But the argument does not all lie in the one direction. The monarch who speaks and acts on the advice of ministers is not a dummy or automaton but a human person of flesh and blood endowed by virtue of that position with dignity and authority. It is most certain, and in no way incompatible with the constitutional rule, that the private views and counsels of the sovereign have at more than one important juncture influenced the advice which ministers finally and formally submitted. It would be absurd if this were not so.

This has a direct bearing upon the conduct and life of the heir apparent. From the moment of accession he will be denied channels of ordinary communication and common experience with his subjects. All the more important is it that he should come to the throne with as much insight and experience of life and people—his people and their life—as may be possible. His environment thitherto will inevitably have been unique; but it need not be that of R. L. Stevenson's "parlour with a regulated temperature".

How is the problem to be best solved? We are not in the *Arabian Nights*, where the Sultan could leave the back door of his palace and mingle, impenetrably disguised, in the avoca-

tions and amusements of the mass of ordinary people. Travelling daily to work on the Underground is not a facility available for the Prince of Wales. He is a public figure, and a unique public figure at that. Whatever functions he undertakes to discharge, his information, his experience and his conclusions will be drawn through a filter; but that is no reason for denying to him personal information, experience and conclusions altogether.

For this, as for all good things, there is a price to be paid and a risk to be taken. In acting as a distinguished public figure, the Prince must go beyond the purely ceremonial and decorative function. If he chairs committees and heads appeals, it must be expected that he is exposed to direct contact with those upon whom he can practise his judgment in something approaching the give-and-take in which other people formulate and mature their opinions. He cannot do this as a cypher. He can do it only by being "his own man", which means expressing opinions as any other public figure in similar circumstances would be expected to do. They are exactly the class of opinions which, as they have indirect or direct political implications, the sovereign would be understood to express in line with ministerial advice from the government of the day.

All this ought to be understood and accepted by those who study the words and actions of the heir apparent. It is no good wanting him to gain insight and practise judgment before his accession, and then discovering with dismay that the opinions he utters are capable of being construed in a political—which in Britain inevitably means in a party-political—sense. Not all the ideas which the Prince forms and expresses will necessarily stand up to rigorous analysis and criticism. In fact, the likelihood is that many will be drawn from the fund of conventionally respectable propositions which have their day and then pass out of fashion again. But we must beware of demanding that the Prince does or says nothing that would not pass the most exacting scrutiny.

After all, we need him to go down into the market place of men and ideas, and get his practice there. There is such a salutary thing as sowing intellectual wild oats. How, without coming up occasionally with what is pretentious and half-baked, can he observe and learn? In the long run, the personal judgment which he is practising must be relied upon to see him through. His future subjects owe him their understanding ○

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WEST COAST WARNER

John Graham profiles a nearly perfect Marina Warner, in scholarly pursuit at the Getty Museum, California
Photograph by Paul Fusco

MARINA WARNER sits in a small room in a modern office building in Santa Monica, California. On one side is the sea, on the other the mountains. She has at her disposal all sorts of gadgetry, human and mechanical: a hard disc computer, archive, projector, four researches—"all with PhDs, much cleverer than me". Up on the 11th floor an attempt to store every single piece of art history in a computer is well-advanced. "You type Verrocchio into the terminal, and out comes everything that's known." It's typical of Marina, that "Verrocchio". The rest of us would have named a more familiar, more accessible artist.

Every year 10 scholars are invited to spend a year at the J. Paul Getty Centre for the Study of Art and the Humanities, selected for some loose connexion with a theme. Last year it was Dutch history and patronage; this year it is the interpretation and reception of images. Marina as religious iconographer fits the theme.

The Centre is set up much as a secular monastery, which Marina, steeped in a Catholic upbringing and culture, rather likes; she can, of course, escape. The scholars inhabit their individual rooms, meeting at 10.30am and again at 3.30pm for "very good coffee and incredibly fattening cakes". They are a mixed bunch—be honest, have you ever heard of an ethno-mathematician, or a narratologist?—and I suppose they're meant to pollinate each other. It's very American, the Centre.

evolved from the artists' "colonies" and "villages" in vogue some years ago. The Centre's job is to *service* art history. Marina sometimes feels she is being microwaved.

Every evening she leaves the monkish cell to rejoin her family. Ten-year-old Conrad will be home from school, and husband Johnnie—the painter, John Dewe Mathews—will be wearing his usual grin. Johnnie was nervous about the whole adventure at first—he does not describe himself as an intellectual—but everyone told him he did not have to paint in his studio in Primrose Hill, he could paint on the beach.

Marina Warner is one of those people whom nobody leaves alone. When the Photographers' Gallery in Great Newport Street put on an exhibition of women in photographs, Marina was a subject. "Hugely pregnant, very near my time, staring out of a window." It was a massively feminine image.

When the Booker Prize committee needed a judge, Marina was one of their choices. (Jim Attallah's *Women* would not have been complete without her. This celebrity status has followed her for more than 20 years. Even before

she went to Oxford to read modern languages, she had been photographed by *Vogue* and was expected to become another Zuleika Dobson.

An Oxford contemporary described her as "hopelessly beautiful, then and now". She has sharp, alert features, huge eyes, a very long neck and a strangely translucent skin, the product of a somewhat unusual parentage.

Her mother came from Molfetta in the impoverished south of Italy and had been teased as a girl for her tallness. She had heard Englishmen were tall and, in a very practical Italian way, decided to marry one. The one she chose was the very English, very tweedy Plum Warner, son of the legendary cricketer. There is a commemorative Warner Stand at Lord's, but Marina has never visited it. She lacks interest in cricket, and sport in general.

The Italian half helps to explain Marina. Her mental approach—"mind-set" in the language of California—is more Continental than English. Her understanding is likely to be more intuitive than analytical. If we were surgeons of the intellect, we would find three clusters—her Catholic culture; her wider, non-insular Europeaness; and her feminism. These joined together for her studies of two great Virgins: Mary of Nazareth and Joan of Arc. The books were showered with praise by critics and historians of global vision, such as Margaret Mead and Philip Toynbee.

But lesser people were less pleased. Two years ago she produced *Monuments and Maidens*, a weighty study of the allegory of the female body. It provoked a savage response from A. N. Wilson in *The Spectator*, under the heading "Mindless, prolix and pretentious".

She is not mindless or pretentious, though prolix may have fair comment; her books are quite long. And she is certainly not, as Wilson went on to say, "a bore and a charlatan". He particularly attacked the very long bibliography appended to *Monuments* which, he claimed, was designed to advertise the author's "supposed learning".

Mark Amory, literary editor of *The Spectator*, says, "A great many people complained. Many said I shouldn't have run the review." Typically, one of the first people to come to her former husband, William Shawcross, war correspondent, author, investigative reporter, and the only English journalist ever to have been nominated for a Pulitzer prize. Typically, too, Marina said nothing.

This all makes her sound rather serious, and her biggest failing is perhaps her lack of subculture. Her culture is all high culture: Florence,



Marina Warner in the J. Paul Getty Museum

Paris (her favourite city), the theatre (the RSC, not the Fringe), opera (not rock gigs) and so on. But there can be plenty of frivolity too. When as a teenager she won £500 on *Double Your Money*, a colossal sum in those days, she went straight to Paris to see her friend Irène, and bought a fur coat and a basket of oysters.

Irène is an unusual woman (all Marina's friends are unusual people). She is a Chinese who wrote a doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne on the activities of the Jesuits in 17th-century China. This rather recherché subject became the starting-point for Marina's first novel, and the novel's title *In a Dark Wood* is a translation from the second line of Dante's *Inferno*. It is not for nothing that she has the reputation of being a blue stocking.

But blue stockings are not supposed to be good-looking, and this is what sometimes annoys people. Many would have preferred if it



at Santa Monica, California, where she moved this year with her husband and son. She was invited to be an art scholar at the Getty study centre

she had become a Zuleika Dobson at Oxford, a socialite and temptress. Instead she worked hard, and became editor of *Isis*. She lived at 152 Wallon Street in Oxford above an off-licence, with Kate Mortimer (now a director of Rothschild's bank), Caroline Elam (later fellow of King's College, Cambridge, now editor of the *Burlington* and leading art historian) and Emma Rothschild (a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

The psychologist John Nicholson, who later married Kate Mortimer, recalls: "Marina wasn't really in their intellectual league, because the others were truly exceptional. But she's made the most of herself by real dedication. I wasn't a psychologist then, I was a musician and provided the light relief. I remember playing piquet with Marina hour after hour."

Three members of the quartet got first-class degrees, some of them multiple first-class

degrees, and then post-graduate degrees. But Marina got a second, and detractors say that is why she has been over-achieving ever since, trying to catch up. They have all remained friends, loyal to each other, unjealous, delighted with each other's successes.

Marina tends to be self-deprecating, modest. "She was strangely unsure of herself," remembers John Nicholson. Such modesty is not fashionable in the 1980s, the Age of Pushy People, of Naim Attallah and Patsy Kensit, of Loyd Grossman and Samantha Fox, of Jeffrey Archer and Margaret Thatcher. These are not the sort of people who inhabit Marina Warner's world. Here is what she says of Mrs Thatcher: "I interviewed her for *Vogue* when she was made leader of the Conservative Party. It's not my party, but I was overjoyed that the Conservatives unprecedentedly, incredibly and surprisingly had elected a woman—and she

was horrible. She was so supercilious and defensive, and almost rude and angry... She has a very unfortunate way of managing to behave as if everybody else is inferior..."

And here is Warner on Warner: "I was determined I would always have my own money, that I would not be in the position of having to ask a man if I could have a coat."

And: "I did want to be a very girlish and perfect girl, but my reveries were of being an incredibly active and effective young man."

And: "I don't believe you should need to be married, I don't believe women should aim at marriage, and I don't believe that marriage is in any way a solution to anything... But it was a deep, emotional need for me, to be married. So, I have been married twice. I am attracted to people who want to marry me, which is pathetic for a feminist, absolutely pathetic." ○

THE LAND OF DREAMS

Stephen Pile visits the coast and ventures to the heart of Australia in his attempt to fathom the psyche of a country approaching its 200th birthday next month. Photographs by Sian Austin



AUSTRALIA celebrates its bicentenary in January and, although it is a fine country, nine parts sand and sun, a lot of us don't want to hear another word about the place. Every author, journalist and television producer who can walk without assistance has been over there and come back with "A Personal View". First, it was Naipaul, then it was Bruce Chatwin, then Thomas Kenally, then Spike Milligan; then some man flying around in a helicopter.

And are you any the wiser for this total overkill? Do you know who the Australians are? May I have one final crack at the topic?

The first thing to note is that the Australians themselves haven't a clue. Bookshops in Sydney are packed full of titles like *The Australians: In Search of an Identity* or *Who are the Australians?* And why should they know? These people have been on the beach for 65 years. You can't expect them to keep the bar-

becue alight and develop a national identity.

The second thing to note is that in Britain all our stereotypes of the Australians are wrong. They are not like Crocodile Dundee. They have nothing whatever to do with outback behaviour, preferring to huddle in luxurious suburbs, seduced by consumerism. They are not like Edna Everage, being nowadays as cosmopolitan as anyone else. And they are not like Rupert Murdoch, who has none of their hedonism, their "mateship", their business conservatism, and their belief that so long as the sun shines and there's still one can of Fosters left everything will be all right. No worries.

So who are they? When I was in Sydney I met a man with a vast ginger beard who was writing a book called *Australia: Land of Illusion*. In my view he came closest to the right answer: he saw it as a huge, terrifying, empty place, the world's largest island with a tiny population of only 17 million. But nature abhors a vacuum, he said, and onto this shimmering desert men of all ages and races have imposed their dreams and delusions.

In its time Australia has been the convict hell, the outback challenge, the land of opportunity and the good-time country. Now it feels to me like Britain in the 1970s with vocal unions and frequent strikes and a wheeler-dealer Labour Prime Minister who is friend to the rich. As the world goes elsewhere for its lamb and its coal, Australia is becoming the land that lives worryingly beyond its means.

You will be asking how I know all this. This year I went to Australia to report on the general election. When the work was done I went trotting around from Sydney into the central desert, out to Cairns on the coast, around the Barrier Reef and thence to the Whitsunday Islands discovered by Captain Cook and now given over to tourism. So I feel able to pontificate.

Sydney was wholly cosmopolitan, extremely beautiful, and amazingly full of homosexuals. It is a place that bears out the dictum of Roland Boldwood, the early Australian novelist: "Know, O friendly generalizer, that there be tall Australians and short Australians, faint or fierce, feeble-clinging or deathless strong, speculative rash Australians, also cautious, very wary Australians. There is no generic native Australian."

Furthermore, Bondi Beach is small, old-fashioned and strangely English. With its pavilion theatre, seafront benches and odd municipal air, it reminded me more than anything else of bygone Torquay.

Over these comfortable suburbanities the myth of the rugged outback pioneer still has a strong hold. The outspoken, uncompromising individual is greatly prized. The latest manifestation for a media age is the world's first completely biased newscaster. Only Australia could have invented Clive Robertson. Anyone tuning in to Channel Seven's innocently named

Newsworld will see this grumpy, owl-like figure who seems unaware of the cameras and is often found drinking tea or removing a stain from his tie for an uncomfortable length of time.

He despises journalists, and regular viewers will know that he often abandons news items half-way through because they are so badly written. They are also acquainted with his habit of throwing stories away unread, because he is not personally interested in them. Boxing items usually get ditched because, he announces, "all boxers are extremely thick with bashed-in noses and I think it should be banned. I also think rugby league is pathetic." When he does read out an item in its entirety, he feels perfectly free to pass acidic comment on the stupidity of the people involved in it. The newscast frequently ends in a tirade and once during a report on the Prime Minister's day campaigning in Queensland, he yawned openly throughout.

Robertson says they would love to sack him, but unfortunately his late-night, lunatic ramblings attract viewing figures that equal the main, serious nine o'clock news. Australians warm to a plain man debunking the pompous. Only they could take this sort of performance to their hearts.

Unlike most Australians, I then left the comfortable city for the interior. Like everyone else visiting this country, there came a time when I had to pass through Alice Springs. It was a slight disappointment. I had expected an old, characterful town, reminiscent of a cowboy stage set. In fact, it is an utterly modern joint that has grown in recent decades to cope with the tourist hordes making their way to Ayers Rock.

The worldwide reputation of this place is based upon the title of Nevil Shute's novel, *A Town Like Alice*, which is on sale in every local bookstore. When you actually read this work, however, you find that Alice Springs is mentioned only once in it as a passing reference.

Although there seem to be only about six cars in the whole neighbourhood, they are always crashing. Large gaping crowds were a feature of most street corners. They are now fitting traffic lights to keep the half-dozen vehicles under control.

The day tour of Alice Springs served merely to underline that there is nothing there at all. The most interesting feature was the headquarters of the Flying Doctor Service, but they weren't in either, being all over the landscape rescuing trapped drivers bitten by poisonous toads. When we stopped for 30 minutes to look at a war memorial that afforded a hilltop view of the region's numerous tennis courts, I slipped off to the pizzeria and waited two hours for a Venice-in-Peril special with extra sausage. In that time I noticed that the two rather demure waitresses served nobody at all apart from a very old couple who attracted much envy when prawn cocktails were set before them. This delay cannot be entirely explained by the fact that one young woman diner was locked in the lavatory for 30 minutes while the chef tried to get her out with a meat cleaver.

The next day, however, things perked up. I

Stephen Pile relaxes at the Great Barrier Reef on Daydream Island where "the hedonistic dream of white Australia is writ large"



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enrolled for the Aboriginal dreamtime tour and would not have missed it for anything. Surprisingly for a tour in honour of the great and ancient Aboriginal culture, the coach driver was 100 per cent racist. "Good morning, my name's Greg," he said over the tannoy. "We're going out now to see how the Abos . . . Aborigines live. They still haven't learnt to live in houses without smashing them up." After dwelling briefly on the fine achievement of white pioneers and explorers in these parts, he told us that 33,000 wooden telegraph poles had been eaten by white ants in six months and then drove us out to the middle of absolutely nowhere.

Suddenly, from behind a bush, Archie emerged. He was a middle-aged and bored-looking Aborigine in a dust-covered blue anorak and a brown trilby with a green feather sticking out of the front of it. He had a streaming cold. Next to him was a white woman who looked like Joan Baez in decline and had a vast compensatory respect for "the Aboriginal people", as she habitually called them.

"Good morning, Archie. Thank you for coming," she said. We all said good morning and with various little gestures of politeness showed that, although white, we had nothing whatever to do with the systematic wiping out of his race.

"Archie is going to show us some of the implements that the Aboriginal people have been using for 10,000 years," the woman said. "The first is a tool used for gutting emus." We followed every skilful flick of Archie's wrist and applauded at the end when imaginary emu intestines were spread out to dry on the sand.

The Joan Baez look-alike then said that Archie's tribe had specially developed a boomerang that did not come back. The returnable kind was invented by Aborigines who hunted the swamps and rivers of the north. Archie's lot were quite happy to trog off and find their boomerangs after use, as indeed was Archie himself. After some impressively long throws our man in the trilby walked off to the other end of the Australian bush collecting them like twigs, while the white woman told us that Aborigine society had been completely fixed for 10,000 years.

There is no word for "why" in their language and every day for centuries was exactly the same. Their dance dramas telling their great mythical stories are strange things to watch, because the performers seem to break off and chat among themselves. In fact, they are making sure that the performance is exactly the same as last time.

In the 19th and 20th centuries we believed in progress and the unchanging Aborigines were



Archie the Aborigine demonstrates his skills with the non-returnable boomerang deep in the Australian outback

swept aside. Now that we are not quite so sure about its virtues we are beginning to see these people's strengths. They are much better equipped to live in the Australian terrain than their white counterparts. They know exactly where to find nourishing grubs and frogs with a refreshing water sack in their stomachs. If they don't wash and look dirty, it is to protect themselves from the skin cancer that ravages the well-scrubbed whites.

Archie returned with his boomerangs and we all clapped, thanked him unctuously and then paid guilt-inflated prices for horrible old hats he had made from tribal hair.

The next day we set off to Ayers Rock, which is the centre of the Aboriginal world. A man called Kevin in a bush hat joined the coach to explain to us the concept of "dreamtime". He said that for Aborigines this was any time past, 10,000 years or 10 minutes ago, that was not the substantial present. More specifically, it was the early time of their history when their ancestors came out of rocks and dreamed the whole world into existence. At least, that's what Kevin said.

We travelled in an air-conditioned double-decker coach. There was a portable doormat on which we had to brush our feet because Greg took a different view of dirt and dust to the Aborigines. "And now we are going to show you a video of the beautiful landscape of central Australia," he said, as tourist eyes turned to the screen and the curtains were drawn. "Dramatic and amazing country . . .

this sunburnt land . . . nature's paintbrush." The real thing was just outside the curtains but Homo Americanus has come to prefer it on a screen.

Many of the tourists were Japanese. (Their population and influence is growing in Australia. They are buying up Sydney brick by brick and the dynamic Asian businessman plays much the same role in shaking up the entrenched, moribund, commercial ways of the white community as, ironically, Australians do in ours.) The Japanese must have the most boring photograph albums in the world. They travel the planet at great expense and then take endless snapshots of themselves, standing bolt upright in unsmiling family groups with breath-taking landmarks merely a backdrop.

Once we saw a dingo ("Ah, tow dingo" was the cry). The coach stopped and out dashed the Japanese, hoping to pose in unsmiling groups next to it. The dingo had other ideas and wisely vanished.

At Ayers Rock itself 5,000 tourists a night stay at the nearby Sheraton and other air-conditioned venues. In the early evening every last one of them gets into a coach and trundles out to see a rock go pink in the sunset. There we all stood, silenced by a piece of nature that we have not managed to modify. It was like a religious gathering. It felt as though John the Baptist was due to come, but they had run out of water. We stared at the majestic rock and if ever there was a time to hire a hot-air balloon, paint a face on it, and let the thing rise up

GEORGE KNIGHT



LISBON. Built in 1878, this superbly maintained Palacete faces one of the prettiest gardens in "old Lisboa" and offers magnificent views of the city. Its main features are the beautifully wood-carved ceilings and skirting-boards; the extensive usage of nineteenth century tiles and best quality marble throughout the four floors of this private residence. In our opinion, this property could ideally be converted into an Embassy or an international company headquarters. The accommodation offered comprises, on the ground-floor: neo-classic style entrance hall, study, kitchen, breakfast room, pantry, bathroom, a patio and a garage for four cars. The first-floor offers: a large drawing room with its fireplace and two french windows overlooking the gardens, a second drawing/living room with its marble flooring, a beautiful dining room with a magnificent white marble fireplace, a second kitchen and a guest's cloakroom. The second floor comprises five large bedrooms, one of them with dressing room and marble fitted bathroom en-suite, two other bathrooms, a library with fire-place and a second breakfast room. On the third floor you will find another large drawing room, with its fireplace, which opens into a large terrace which offers the most spectacular views of St. Jorge's castle and the whole of the surrounding area down to the Tagus. Also staff quarters comprising three bedrooms and two bathrooms. There is a lift serving the four floors and the total built area is of 1,340 sq. mts.

Price: Escudos 130,000,000 (approx. £560,000)

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



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ESTORIL. Situated in one of the most exclusive residential areas of Estoril is this mansion, built in 1964 and set in its own, south-facing grounds of 2,600 sq. mts. which have been beautifully landscaped and include a small swimming pool. On the ground floor the drawing room, the dining room, the sitting room and the library lead out to a very large sun terrace from which a wide, stylish staircase leads down into the garden. The ground floor further provides a spacious kitchen and pantry, laundry room and staff quarters. On the first floor five bedrooms all with en-suite bathrooms and all with access to another large sun terrace. The second floor offers another sitting room and a third sun terrace. There is also a wine cellar, a games room and a separate staff cottage. Internal telephone system, central heating and garage. Price: Escudos 80, 000,000 (Approx. £340,400)

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YOUR MAN IN LISBON

behind the monolith, this was it. The second the sun began to fail 100 coach engines started simultaneously and Homo Americanus rolled across the desert in a comfortable caravan.

The next day we were taken to the most outrageous tourist stunt I have ever witnessed. It was an Aborigine encampment, showing what Aboriginal mud huts would look like if they lived in them, which they don't and never have done, being nomads. Still, it was something for the Japanese to stand next to. In one of the huts was a video full of Aborigines complaining about the tourists. For them Ayers Rock is a place of ritual significance, where the great kangaroo man, among others, rose up in dreamtime and created all the kangaroos. White men, by contrast, just want to climb all over it like ants, while the Aborigines watch with laughter and amazement.

And so to the Barrier Reef. En route I stopped at Cairns to rest by the coast and hit the Great Crocodile Debate. Two tourists had just been consumed in the Northern Territory and there had been a public outcry for the systematic culling of these horrific animals. Some years ago they were made a protected species and now they are in every stream, rivulet and corporation drainpipe. You can even buy T-shirts designed to look ripped, tattered and covered in post-attack blood.

However, a second and larger outcry came from the department of tourism who said that the possibility of danger, while floating down an infested river, was "a talking point" and brought more holidaymakers to Australia than the Sydney Opera House ever did. This argument seems likely to win the day.

To pass the afternoon in Cairns I joined a crocodile tour on the SS *Louisa*, a little motorized paddle-steamer run by a sweet-natured married couple who patrol daily the most dangerous stretch of river in the world. "And now we head out to Admiralty Island," the husband announced over the tannoy. "It is inhabited by crocodiles, snakes, lizards and seven varieties of poisonous spider. My wife, Rosemary, will now come round with tea and biscuits." In total silence we passed around the island, clutching our teacups and scouring the coast for something really awful. Suddenly, the silence was broken.

"Look," cried a white-haired woman in utter panic.

"Where?" was the general hoot.

"There," said the terrified granny. "Those eyes." We all stared fiercely.

"It's a giant frog," said the laconic voice over the tannoy. In the end we saw nothing at all so we chugged home while Rosemary passed



A "Joan Baez look-alike" explains the 10,000-year-old Aboriginal culture to tourists on the dreamtime tour

round her photograph album full of ghastly things sighted on previous tours. Of course, if crocodiles have a sense of humour I suspect they travel in convoy underneath the boat.

As the tour ended we passed Wright's Creek, which contained Moody's Ark. At the age of 78 a local gentleman called Mr Moody decided that he would build a boat out of mangrove trees and sail round the world. Against all advice, he became a total hermit in pursuit of his aim, working day and night to chop and drag whole tree trunks to the water's edge. After five years of unremitting work he was found dead in the hull, preparing to set off.

I mention this only to illustrate that, after the outback pioneer, the figure Australians most admire is "the battler". This term crops up continually in newspaper headlines and stories. He is the little man, fighting against the odds, who as often as not screws up. It is Australia's version of the British love of the underdog.

In fact, white Australians only really make use of the coast line. At the Barrier Reef they seemed happiest of all. The strange thing here is that every bay is full of flat-bottomed boats floating past like the *Marie Celeste*. They have glass-window floors and the unseen inmates are bent double staring down at the fish and the wondrous coral.

My own wanderings ended out on Daydream Island, where the hedonistic dream of white Australia is writ large. All is food and fun and beer and dancing and sport and parties every night. Palm trees are not indigenous to

the region, but have been imported to enhance the paradise-island illusion. This explains why they seem to grow only in neat rows along the activities beach and at 6 foot intervals around the swimming pool.

My only complaint about Daydream Island is that the resident band, The Bungle Brothers, rehearse all afternoon in the bar. The lunch hour was disturbed by their lead singer howling out folk songs by the grass-hut bar on a floating island in the middle of the swimming pool. He was a tanned, rippling and strangely unmusical youth in vest and Bermuda shorts who dedicated each number to the week's female talent. "This is for Debbie/Suzie/Wendy/Carly/Mona/Harriet."

Like most Australians he used the word "party" as a verb. He was having a good time now, but "tonight we're really going to party". At 3am you would see him in the bar obliterated with pleasure.

I had been from Aboriginal dreamtime to the white man's Daydream Island. Lying on a beach chair I read a newspaper report of the speech delivered by David Armstrong, Director of the Australian Bicentenary Authority. He saw the aim of the bicentenary as being "to find a national identity".

And that is the problem really. Two hundred years is far too short a period to develop a clear national character, as waves of Asian immigrants now join the already polyglot community. They are still inventing modern Australia. Come back in 200 years ○



Ethnic with ethics, Dukakis prepares to take his party into the Oval office. But can he win support from the ordinary US Democratic voter?

THE TAXMAN RUNNETH

Michael Dukakis has suddenly emerged as a leading candidate for the Democratic nomination in the United States. Edward Pearce assesses his chances and his record on taxes in Massachusetts

ON THE day that Gary Hart's excursion with Donna Rice became public knowledge, the Turkish government made frantic inquiries: was it true that a Greek might become the next President of the United States?

The Turks were unnecessarily anxious, since the Greek in question, Michael Dukakis, dislikes ancestral ethnic feuds. Yet Greece is not far away for the Governor of Massachusetts. His father arrived in America without speaking a word of English when he was 15, but in the way of the gifted and infinitely diligent, he graduated from Harvard before he was 23. It was a

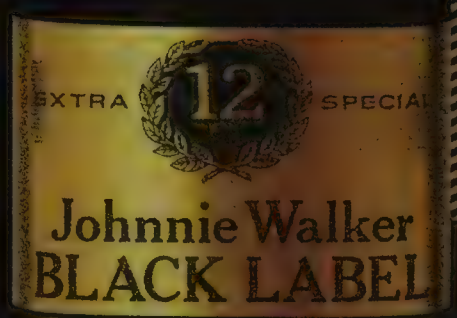
hard act to follow, but Michael's application, industry and achievement have never been doubted, even by his political enemies.

Of all the Democratic candidates, the Governor is the best organized, and unlike many of them, he has a record of administrative achievement. In his three terms as Governor of the State he has taken it through an economic transformation but it would be crass and dishonest of his supporters to take all the glory since the rest of New England has shared in this economic renaissance. Just as Cambridge, England, served as a growth point for high-

technology industry and secondary services, so did Cambridge, Massachusetts, home of Harvard. Even so this economic revival has been accompanied by an administration of keen intelligence and activism.

The Governor's attitude to revenue is most instructive. Dukakis's first term (1974-78) ended in defeat because he had primly insisted on a tax surcharge to balance the books. That sort of thing may be virtuous but people tend to vote against it. When he won a second bite at the governorship in 1982, he hired an academic, Ira Jackson from Harvard, and made him tax

Make the ultimate sacrifice. Give one to someone else.



commissioner. They began to balance the books by closing tax loopholes and punishing tax evasion much harder (it was raised from a felony to a misdemeanour in legal terms). Dukakis and Jackson also provided attractive disincentives to potential tax evaders by declaring an amnesty for late payers, providing that they paid.

It worked wonderfully, bringing in some \$86 million—four times what had been expected and creating on the last day of the amnesty a line of 11,000 penitents queuing round the block from the Boston tax office. At the same time, the waiting period for a tax refund was cut from four months to 12 days, thus making the revenue office as popular as any revenue office is likely to be. The result of this imaginative stick-and-carrot treatment was that tax revenue was raised by 5 per cent.

Given the enormous US deficit, tax revenue is an important, not to say sensitive, subject throughout the country. In the last election Walter Mondale made a creditable stand for higher taxes which, although being intellectually correct, was rejected by the electorate. Despite everyone knowing that the US Treasury has over-borrowed, almost all politicians are chary of the only honest solution. This gives Governor Dukakis something pertinent to talk about in his campaign speeches.

If Massachusetts can solve its problems by a judicious combination of rigorous enforcement and amnesty, the implication is that enormous sums might be raised for the US Treasury with the nationwide application of Dukakis's measures. The Governor and his aides talk about a figure as high as \$100 billion. This is scornfully denied by some authorities and is very much a question for technicians with a taste for tea-leaf forecasting. But the US debt is serious business, especially for Europeans, particularly as the destructive protectionism of the second strongest Democratic contender, Congressman Richard Gephardt of Missouri, manifests itself. The Dukakis-Jackson approach may have been tested in local circumstances only, but it is at least an adult attempt to face a problem from which the Americans under President Pangloss have flinched.

Increased tax revenue was not Dukakis's only achievement in his state. He is by instinct an interventionist in an old-fashioned liberal tradition. And he does appear to have prevented Massachusetts's high growth from concentrating in coagulating clots around Boston and its suburbs. The Governor has been keen on dispersal in a fashion which is touchingly reminiscent of the British Labour Party. Advised by Frank Keefe, his director of state planning, Dukakis has used every available device to coax industry back into the traditional, latterly run-down centres such as Lowell, a sort of New England Bolton and once the home of the state's textile industry. By guiding \$98 million of public money into Lowell, the Governor helped stimulate nearly two-and-a-half times as much (\$238 million) private investment. The entire town has been declared a heritage park because of its economic history. It has been cleaned up, made more attractive and now draws 500,000 visitors a year. But it has also lured computer manufacturers Wang and the major food company Prince Spaghetti, and 24 per cent of the town's workforce is now employed in high-technology industries.

With Massachusetts employment down to 3.2 per cent, and with Dukakis's good record as an administrator, the Governor began to be seen as an outside runner for the Democratic nomination. After Hart's escapade had removed an unattractive man for the wrong reasons, Dukakis suddenly became deadly serious. He is well organized and has the largest war chest (\$4.2 million in the first quarter of his campaign). Also, he has been able to take the pick of the research and advisory staffers cast into the market by the amorous Hart. People such as Paul Tully, for his national campaign, and Theresa Vilmain, in Iowa, are major acquisitions.

Against Dukakis is his doctrinaire innocence on foreign affairs. Good at solving problems rationally, he strikes onlookers as a man too reasonable and insufficiently wary to handle the world's crazies. The experience of hard-nosed Republicans getting into imbroglios in Lebanon and the Gulf has not cured Americans of the view that truculent patriotism is the highest wisdom. And the American economy is cemented into defence contracts to a degree which idealistic Liberal Democrats, if they want to be elected, have to accommodate.

The isolationism towards which America sometimes seems to be leaning is not pacific; it will be an armed isolationism, shutting its doors to competitive trade and flexing its muscles to punish enemies. The conflict between Dukakis and Richard Gephardt will illustrate this. The congressman is playing dirty by pitching for trade restrictions in a populist way—something to which the Governor cannot happily respond. On this issue he is simply in the right. But in his down-the-line overseas optimism he is probably unrealistic. He could and should harden up his act for an audience less pure than the one in Cambridge, Mass.

Another point against Dukakis is the fact that he is an ethnic, a ghastly American word in a nation which goes on interminably about the wrongs of racism yet cherishes it. He is not one of those English, Scots and Irish from whom Americans delight in taking their presidents, nor one of those Germans (Eisenhower) or Scandinavians (Humphrey, Mondale) who may come to table. He is a south European, a Greek, and his wife, Kitty, is Jewish. It is ironical, on top of this meridional curse, to be damned also for coming from the East Coast, home of Liberal high-spending politics and the sort of Brahmins not admired where unsaleable cereals grow in oceanic quantity. But just as Kennedy, that otherwise unworthy hero, was able admirably to break down the presumption that Catholics were unelectable, as much must now be done for ethnics.

There is, after all, a potential ethnic vote for Dukakis. The Hispanics have no one of their own running and the Greeks are a small but not unpopular community, for whom the Cubans, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans could vote as the Portuguese of New Bedford, Mass already do. And Dukakis, characteristically, can speak Spanish.

But where Dukakis is weakest is not in his fitness to be president, nor in the spectrum of his views, but in personality. He does not, and never will, start prairie fires.

If he lacks the brashness of Jesse Jackson, he also lacks the inspirational warmth of that probable non-candidate and fellow ethnic, Mario Cuomo. The Italian has the ability to endear himself to opponents, to appeal openly

to the heart without becoming a sobbing tenor, and he has a platform grandeur wholly denied to the lucid, fair-minded, matter-of-fact Greek New Englander. Edwin Arlington Robinson, who came from Maine, once observed in his poem *New England*:

“Passion here is deemed a soilure of the wits . . .
And conscience always has the rocking chair,
Cheerful as when she frightened into fits,
The first cat that was ever killed by care.”

Ethnic Dukakis may be, to people who mutter things like that into their beer, but he is an instinctive child of his state and region. He has no demotic facility and can be just a little pious where he thinks himself right. (And, of course, in his support for a nuclear freeze which would have left 350 Soviet SS20 missiles in Eastern Europe, he has not been right. Though his contempt for “deals with dictators, juntas and Generals” looks, on recent showing, to be sound thinking as well as general-issue Cambridge virtue.)

As the Republican commentator, Bill Schneider, remarks: “Mike is the archetype of the upper-middle-class liberal. He's from Brookline, the bastion of good government high-mindedness. If he got elected, the Kennedy School of Government would be running the country.” You could have worse things said about you.

As the campaign moves forward to Iowa and New Hampshire, “Super-Tuesday” (when most of the Southern States take part in primaries on the same day) and the rest of the primaries, the question remains whether this long-nostrilled, fastidious, honest man can project himself with the ordinary Democratic voter, a fellow with a six-pack, strong patriotic reflexes and a taste for supporting his party for every office except President.

Unquestionably, he is the best of the active Democratic runners, though Paul Simon of Illinois has period charm and an integrity which edges towards authenticity. The odds are that Dukakis is a sufficiently superior article to the self-invented mechanical politician, Gephardt, for the quality to show.

He has one other thing going for him: not ethnics but ethics. At a time when people have been made touchy about the private conduct of politicians, Dukakis is the least likely candidate for any sort of scandal, sexual or financial. In the case of Hart there were unpublished dossiers long before Donna Rice met the *Miami Herald* on her doorstep. In the case of Dukakis, one hears, no iceberg therefore no tip.

At 53, with an excellent measure of accomplishment in government, but views on foreign policy too pacific for Joe Six-Pack, the man looks like the Democratic candidate. Unfortunately, that candidate in turn looks like a more cerebral, better organized version of Walter Mondale.

The Democrats are no longer certain to lose the presidential campaign, though they will be vulnerable, like Labour here, in the foreign and defence fields. That may depend on the Republican choice. Against low, explosive Bob Dole, Dukakis would look like what the Americans delight to call a milquetoast. Against fussy George Bush, with all his right-wing enemies, he would look like a fellow New Englander, giving the voters Hobson's choice. With the Republican bull market crumbling, the idea of Dukakis as president is at least feasible ○

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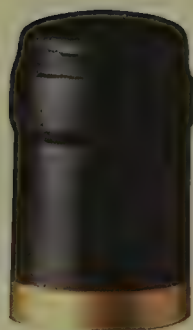
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Off to the Caprice

Kingsley Amis joins the bright young things at a popular haunt

NOT MANY people will need to be told that the Caprice is tucked away off St James's Street behind the Ritz. It has been so famous for so long that a good 25 years ago a thrusting young executive in a British film could announce he was "off to the Caprice" and be generally understood as referring to the restaurant where the upwardly mobile (as they came to be called) would forgather to do themselves well, goggle at the birds and see and be seen. A great deal about the place has changed since those days but not that. Some of the customers, of course, have not much further up to move: I was lucky enough to spot Jeffrey Archer on one of my visits, but on my way out, dammit, too late to keep him under observation, and an even more spiteful twist of Fate caused me to miss John Mortimer altogether. But it was good to know he had been there.

Nowadays the restaurant is famous among other things for its black-and-white décor, which is fine as far as it goes but a little bleak in the narrow part of the room, away from the likes of Archer and Mortimer. At lunchtime you look out here on to the blank front of a large block of flats and a row of parked motor-cycles. On the wall behind there hang a couple of objects not classifiable as either pictures or sculptures, resembling a child's construction-set in top view. A photograph of Michael Caine is to be seen near by, but this is virtually compulsory in a place of this kind, no more significant than a picture of Hitler in a Berlin café under the Nazis. The one of Mick Jagger near the Ladies is very tasteful.

Being, so to speak, round the corner like this does at least put some distance between you and the pianist who comes on in the evening. He plays stuff quite acceptable to a lot of people, like "Blue Moon" and "Deep Purple", but a bit loud for me and also out of tempo, so that you find yourself waiting for him to get down to business and constantly being thwarted. But the roar of talk will cover him up satisfactorily after about three-quarters of an hour. Most of this comes from yuppies of various ages, though when we came at midday we had next to us a quartet of American matrons whose voices filled in the bass register.

To leave the food and drink until now, after an account of sights and sounds, matches quite well the priorities of the Caprice. So: there is no

bar, or rather there is only a long glossy counter with fixed stools where you are expected to eat rather than simply booze. However, drinks are promptly brought to the table, and between us we sampled an expertly mixed and admirably cold Dry Martini, a well-balanced White Lady, a rather pallid Old-Fashioned and a decently sizeable glass of champagne. The food tends to

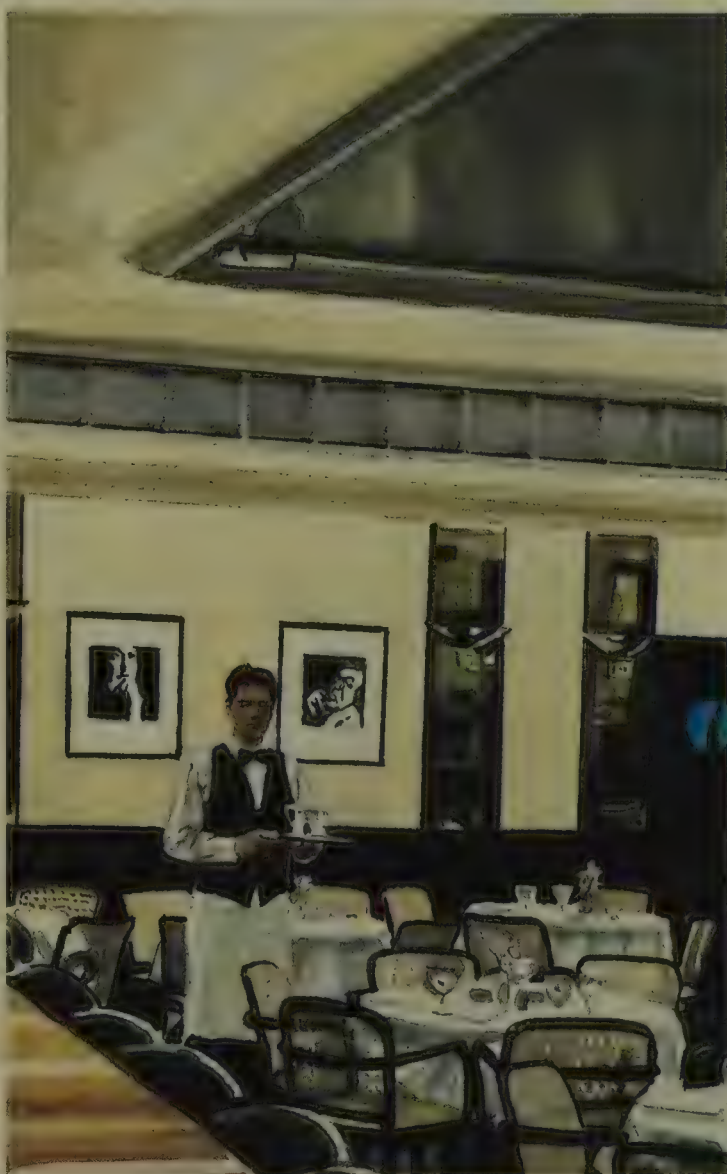
tin, and the whole thing needed a dressing, though a vinaigrette quickly came when asked for. The ribbon pasta came in a crab sauce so subtle that it tasted only faintly of crab and not at all of anything else, but it was not dry and went down well. So did my salmon *cru*, which I thought was like raw salmon.

Predictably, the main courses proved the least satisfactory. The grilled halibut was or had been tasty enough but as so often was dull because overcooked. My guest pronounced her grouse excellent considering it was served in the new way, i.e. without what you used to take for granted, like gravy, game chips and stuffing. My salmon fishcake, a dodgy choice anyway, erred on the side of authenticity and was heavy. As for my liver and onions, the onions were good, as were all the vegetables, but the liver carried large bits of that plastic network stuff that renders the affected areas uneatable.

Again as usual, the sweets somewhat retrieved the balance. Passion fruit yoghurt, kiwi and yoghurt mousse, a damp sponge cake—how could they not slide down? I succumbed to something called *tiramisu*, ultimately from Japan I suppose, a confection of chocolate fairly dripping with calories and served in such a whacking portion that only an outstandingly greedy man could have eaten all of it. Modest chaps like me gaze at the mound left on our plates and feel slightly piggy.

We washed our grouse and liver down very acceptably with a 1978 Châteauneuf du Pape—worth going for a bit of age there to get the famous robustness in full. With the puddings we tried something I had got no nearer to before than hearing of it, an eiswein from Germany. This "ice-wine" is grown so far north that the grapes freeze on the vine and the water content is thus removable. The result is striking and tremendously sweet.

The service at the Caprice is unimprovably welcoming, and the place is packed and booked right up. Nevertheless we emerged with some relief from the strip-lighting and the feel of a stylish cafeteria inside an office ○



PAT FOGARTY

start arriving at about the time of the second drink, a bit soon by my standards, and everything seems to happen rather fast, though we never felt we were being hurried along.

In general the food seems a good deal on the up-and-down side. I quite fell for the bang-bang chicken, which was served coolish in a tasty peanut sauce that might have gone through a stage as peanut butter but was none the worse for that. The grapefruit segments in the grapefruit-and-carrot salad had a matt finish indicating premature extraction from the

Le Caprice, Arlington House, Arlington Street, SW1 (629 2239). Mon-Fri noon-2.30pm, 7pm-midnight; Sat 7pm-midnight; Sun noon-3pm, 7pm-midnight. About £35 for two

Boxing Day lunch

Matthew Fort rehabilitates the festive family feast

CHRISTMAS is rolling up on the horizon again. Dig out the *marrons glacés*, the crystalized ginger and the boxes of nuts. Soak the plum pudding in brandy and whip it into the butter. And scour the recipe books for a hint on how to make a turkey a gastronomic wonder for all the family.

As a food writer, you're on a hiding to nothing as soon as you put pen to paper about Christmas. So I won't. I will leave the field of Christmas to harder souls, and take Boxing Day as the easy option.

I think Boxing Day is in need of rehabilitation, anyway. Traditionally in Britain it's the day when we all make a gallant effort to reduce the leftovers from the day before—devilling the turkey legs that didn't cook properly, resuscitating the mince pies that no one could face after you had made them eat at least one helping of Christmas pudding, and tucking into the chocolates that were a mouthful too far at the end of the previous day's intemperate dinner.

Last year, however, I was forced to consider Boxing Day in a new light. We had 22 of my immediate family for lunch, ranging between seven months and 70-odd years. Clearly, leftovers would not do. On the other hand, there were certain practical constraints to take into account. We cannot seat 22 moderately well trained adults at our table, let alone seven unbroken children.

Then there is the problem of plate logistics. To serve, let's say, a modest four-course lunch, you need a service of 4×22 . 4×21 , actually; I don't think little Sophie was up to handling a knife and fork just then. But whichever way you count them, we don't have 4×21 plates.

Finally, there's the question of timing. I suppose it's theoretically possible to serve 20 or so people at the same time, but in my experience you've scarcely got half-way through, when those to whom you dished out first are already crying for seconds. Besides, I didn't want to be perpetually doling out the grub. I wanted to circulate. I wanted to eat. I wanted to chat. Yes, and I wanted to drink, too.

When people arrive at your door on Boxing Day, tired, bilious and fractious from the excesses of the day before, they have to be coaxed gently back into the Festive Season Spirit. I know no better means of doing so than by pouring a glass or two of Royal Punch down their throats. The unlikely sounding combination of fresh lemon juice, sugar, green tea, burgundy, hock, champagne, rum, and maraschino served warm, has a body to balance its seductive potency. This is a proper drink, and not just a blend of firewater to kick start your party into life. You can find the full recipe in the *Constance Spry Cookery Book*.

So the children fizzed around the house and the adults began to thaw out while I carved the cold roast beef.

To my mind roast beef *en masse* is a thing of



STUART NICOL

joy. I had bought this particular rib at Frank Godfrey in Seymour Place, the only butchers in London to be able to guarantee you a piece of Aberdeen Angus which will have been hung for anything up to three weeks. The rib weighed 12lb with the bone in, and looked like the Rock of Gibraltar. The layer of fat that encrusted the outside was a golden brown foam, and, as I pared away the slices, the inside, moist and succulent through slow cooking, became pink and then red.

However, proud though I was of the roast beef, I was prouder still of my game pies which I had made a couple of days before.

Whatever anybody tells you, working with the pastry necessary for making raised pies is a nightmare. The filling was no problem. I chopped the venison, hare, rabbit, pheasant and pigeon I had bought at Sainsbury's (quite good enough for this kind of thing) into bite-sized chunks, as the advertisements say, and marinated them in two different marinades. I diced the belly-pork forcemeat painstakingly by hand. Then I went to work on the pastry.

Read a recipe, and you'd think making hot-water pastry is as easy as, well, pie. There's a period of about 10 minutes when the stuff is in a condition to do what you want with it. After that, forget it. Ten minutes sounds quite reasonable, doesn't it? Well, let me tell you about the things the cookery books gloss over. How it tears under its own weight,

collapses under its own weight, cools down and cracks, falls to bits when you try to put the filling in it. What had seemed the work of a few hours became the labour of half a day. It almost cost me my sanity. It certainly lost me one game pie, which I threw away in a fit of rage.

But, but, but, two days later there they sat like huge, old-fashioned leather purses, round and fat, sagging at the bottom, but undeniably raised at the top, with a rich golden glaze all over. You would never have found those in a shop. The meat was rich and moist, and the lot vanished in the twinkling of an eye. Even the children were quite impressed.

This was a day for good grub rather than fine food. Baked potatoes, their insides sodden in juices from cooking the beef, and what certain cookery books call *quelques feuilles du potager*, in other words a salad of whatever you can scrape together; a few leaves of sorrel, some curly endive, lamb's tongue lettuce, *cicoria di Verona*, parsley—the greenery that no garden should be without in the middle of winter—provided bulk and vitamins.

To drink, we followed up the Royal Punch with some Recioto Amarone della Valpolicella 1974 (Bertani) from The Wine Society, a red wine of incomparable richness that comes from being made with partly dried grapes, balanced by a touch of bitterness. For those who had to have white wine, and there are always some, the Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico 1984 (Monte Schiaro) from the Wandsworth Wine Cellar seemed more than acceptable to judge by the number of empties.

I have a confession to make at this point. I was not responsible for the puddings. They were provided on a co-operative basis, and they came flooding in from the four corners of the Home Counties; a light round astringent apricot and orange mousse, mince pies to mop up an udderful of thick jersey cream; and a simnel cake of such fruit-crammed richness, of such gravitas it could have easily held a medium-sized, ocean-going cruiser at anchor. It was a perfect match for the baby Stilton and a round of a soft English cheese called Sharpham, both bought at Neal's Yard Dairy, hard by Covent Garden.

It was 6.30pm by the time the last yawning toddler and indulgent adult were ushered out the door. Lunch had not become tea. It had just gone on and on. Of the potatoes, salad and game pie, not a scrap remained. The apricot and orange mousse had vanished. A few crumbs were mute testimony to the mince pies. There was a sliver of cake left, and some of the cheese, but that was no surprise; and a slice or two of beef. There were the plates, too, stacked ready for the dishwasher, the serried ranks of glasses, and a sea of empty bottles and a heady sense of well being. Yes, roll over, Christmas Day, but roll on Boxing Day ○



Greetings *Le Mont-Dore*
from *Saturday.*

Dinner party at the Chalet.
Jules Verne outlined the plot of
his latest manuscript, "Journey to
the Bottom of the Garden".
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he write something
with a little more
depth to it.

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REVIEWS

Huston's last film and Attenborough's attack on apartheid; Glyndebourne presents new talent while the Playhouse reopens with a flop



Party scene in *The Dead* from the story by James Joyce. The Conroys are played by Anjelica Huston and Donal McCann, centre, with linked arms

CINEMA

Swan song in the snow

TWELFTH NIGHT, Dublin, 1904. Snow is gently dusting the gaslit streets as guests arrive at the Georgian townhouse of the Misses Morkan, who are renowned for their annual post-Christmas party. During the entertainment, the dancing, the dinner of roast goose and the flow of conversation we find out a great deal about those present, in particular the most handsome couple at the table, the Conroys, played by Donal McCann and Anjelica Huston. As the evening draws to a close he learns from his wife a secret of her past that has affected their relationship and will bind them closer to each other in future.

John Huston's final film, *The Dead*, is intimate and small in scale, a skilful adaptation by his son Tony of the story in James Joyce's *Dubliners*. It is acted by a brilliant, all-Irish cast, and supported with a delicately atmospheric score which is composed by Alex North.

How felicitous that 46 years after his directing career began with *The Maltese Falcon* this, rather than one of those recent, best forgotten works, should be the last. The ultimate scene visualizes Joyce's extraordinary image of snow falling on Ireland and possibly throughout the universe, bringing the living and the dead together in symbiotic unity, and is a masterly translation of prose from the printed page onto film.

In the main, however, *The Dead* is visually unspectacular, confined in its setting, with the audience taking part as the silent spectator of a private event. But throughout it is a richly satisfying work, with a display of impeccable ensemble acting from a cast that includes Cathleen Delany, Donal Donnelly, Dan O'Herlihy, Sean McClory, Frank Patterson and other luminaries of the Irish theatre.

The strength of passion pulses through *Cry Freedom*, Richard

Attenborough's attack on apartheid, with the double story of the death in police custody of an articulate, charismatic advocate of black rights, Steve Biko, and the escape from South Africa of the banned newspaper editor, Donald Woods, who had befriended Biko and revealed to the public the unwholesome circumstances of the tragedy.

Attenborough is at his best when dealing with spectacle and crowds, and the set pieces such as the Crossroads eviction, the Biko funeral and the Soweto massacre are chilling re-creations. John Briley's screenplay welds the story of the Woods family's flight into the broader history of apartheid in the 70s, and because the escape is presented with a degree of suspense more in keeping with an adventure film, the pill is sugared for the serious message. That is legitimate enough if audiences on a scale to match the film's large budget are to be attracted into the cinemas, but will probably offend those who do not regard racial oppression as a fit topic for entertainment.

Kevin Kline as Woods and Penelope Wilton as his wife are

amiable white liberals, and John Thaw and Timothy West as government minister and policeman convincingly represent the rigid faith of the voortrekker. The outstanding performance is that of Denzel Washington, who manages to invest Biko, the young black leader, with a saintly idealism without losing contact with his ordinary human qualities which include an engaging charm.

More modest in scale is *The Kitchen Toto*, a glimpse of Kenya in the years preceding independence when the Mau Mau uprising was hastening the force of history. The viewpoint of the film is that of a 12-year-old Kikuyu boy (Edwin Mahinda) who, after his pacifist father, a preacher, has been killed by terrorists, secures a job as a kitchen houseboy, or toto, in the home of the white police commander (Bob Peck). The chief's wife (Phyllis Logan) is bitter and cold, their 11-year-old son (Ronald Pirie) a more dedicated zealot of stuffy colonial attitudes than his father. Harry Hook's first feature, which he wrote and directed, is an assured and promising debut ○

—GEORGE PERRY

OPERA

Soviet success in Sussex

NIGEL OSBORNE's new opera *The Electrification of the Soviet Union*, presented this autumn by Glyndebourne Touring Opera, marks the British début of the controversial young American producer Peter Sellars and is not to be missed. It is the product of a close collaboration between composer, librettist and producer, Sellars having influenced Craig Raine in the structuring of his libretto, drawn from Pasternak's novella *The Last Summer*.

The revised version is concise, poetic and abruptly cross-cut so that it cries out for the camera treatment it will receive when it is recorded for BBC Television. What the production fails to convey clearly are the time changes, though George Tsybin's set—a long, jointed wall that snakes through endless transformations—is constantly on the move, shifting the place of action.

The opera opens in the winter of 1916, when the poet Serezha, based on the young Pasternak, arrives by train to visit his sister Natasha. He falls asleep and dreams, remembering his former life, in the summer of 1914, as a tutor in a Jewish household, his romantic attachment to the

governess, Anna, and his sexual encounters with the prostitute, Sashka. This world is shattered by the Revolution and Serezha has no place in the new order.

It is a slight story in which the people and their uneasy relationships are more clearly defined than events, both dramatically and musically. The score is most memorable for the beautifully written poetic solos for Natasha, Anna and Sashka and for Pasternak's powerful opening song.

Sellars draws strongly motivated performances from the whole cast. Elizabeth Laurence is outstanding in the complex role of the governess, which she sings with vibrant intensity. Anna Steiger is warm and touching as Sashka and acts with unselfconscious charm when required to appear naked. Henry Herford's portrayal of the older Pasternak is well contrasted with Omar Ebrahim's youthful Serezha. Elgar Howarth draws polished playing from the London Sinfonietta, but too often allows them to cover the vocal line. There will be a semi-staged performance at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on December 7 and it returns to Glyndebourne next summer ○

—MARGARET DAVIES

THEATRE

All air and no dynamics

THE PREMIÈRE of *Girlfriends* brought back into the West End list an endearing London theatre, The Playhouse in Northumberland Avenue, which had been lost, except for specialized BBC work, for over 30 years.

The re-opening production, a musical, may surprise casual playgoers for whom the title sounds bland or frothy. It is certainly neither of these. The scene is of a British aerodrome during the late autumn of 1941. William Dudley's designs are imaginative and economical, especially in the single impression of a flare path.

Howard Goodall, the composer, who was not born until the late 1950s, has already written one musical, *The Hired Man*, honoured less for its narrative than for its intensely dramatic score. The book, co-written by John Retallack, is the trouble in *Girlfriends*. The narrative has nothing special to say except a general impression of an aero-

drome's world: the control station, the WAAF's hut, an air-raid shelter and the parade ground where a Glasgow girl endures the rigours of pack-drill.

Nearly all the characters are members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. The luckless Jasmine (acted by Jenna Russell) is one who rises immediately from the cast-list. Few others do, except a WAAF, Phyllis (Hazel O'Connor)—whose latest pilot friend (David Easter) will not, of course, return from his final sortie—a very reasonable commanding officer (Donna Champion), and the entirely unreasonable sergeant (Tina Jones).

Overall, it is the atmospheric score that predominates, and (as in *The Hired Man*) Goodall's dwells in the mind—particularly the choruses—in its strong and repetitive resolution. It is a pity that the lyrics are not as effective ○

—J. C. TRÉWIN

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LONDON

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The pick of Christmas reading

RECENT FICTION

More Die of Heartbreak

by Saul Bellow
Alison Press/Secker & Warburg,
£10.95

The Gooseboy

by A. L. Barker
Hutchinson, £9.95

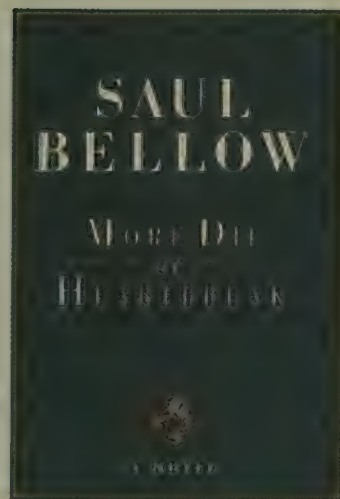
Ruins

by Brian Aldiss
Hutchinson, £7.95

RADIATION may be bad but more people die of heartbreak, remarks the distinguished American botanist Benn Crader in Saul Bellow's latest novel. If this were better understood, he implies, there would be public protests about it. The lemming-like compulsion to head for disaster in personal relationships, the torment of 20th-century sexuality: here is an admirable theme for an existentialist tragi-comedy in the Bellow manner.

Benn and his admiring nephew Kenneth, who teaches Russian literature and has left Paris to settle in the Middle West and be near his uncle, are both gifted men who have been emotionally damaged. Kenneth has a three-year-old daughter by a woman who refuses to marry him. Battle-scarred from the sexual warfare he has been engaged in while a widower for 15 years, Benn marries a beauty called Matilda. This proves a fatal connexion drawing him into a world of wheeling and dealing, political and judicial corruption, where he is out of his depth. There are star parts here for crooks like his own aging uncle Vilitzu, and Bellow's treatment of this farcical melodrama is exhilarating.

Benn has a more serious problem. Watching Hitchcock's film *Psycho* he is shocked by the experience of confusing Matilda with Anthony Perkins playing a transvestite psychopath, and consequently suspecting violent impulses in himself. As Kenneth sees it, this lurid episode was a warning to his uncle not to marry Matilda because she was not the woman of his heart. Benn the botanical genius has also chosen the wrong mother-in-law. He is taken in by Mrs Layamon's arti-

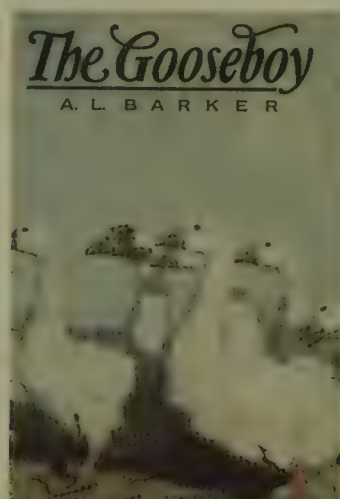


ficial azalea and, having thus lost his rapport with plants, exiles himself to the North Pole (where there are no plants) as a member of an international team of scientists.

Bellow's thesis is the difficulty of making a case for enduring personal relationships. We are all afraid of being tricked though we insist on trying to make them work. Benn marries Matilda to obtain a family; she is marrying him because she wants him to be a host to celebrities—"the spouse who went with the house". Kenneth flies monthly to Seattle to see his daughter, only to be kicked in the teeth by her mother. Real family for him means Benn, a relationship based on deep affection and mutual intellectual stimulus. Of his uncle, in whose illuminating presence he felt life made essential advances, he observes, "Such unsought gifts grope for human completion. But how much completion do they need?"

Bellow's analysis of the dislocation in relations between men and women, though sometimes gratuitously embellished with literary, historical and philosophical allusions, is a dazzling performance. *More Die of Heartbreak*, like the best of his fiction, is at once speculatively profound and exuberantly comic.

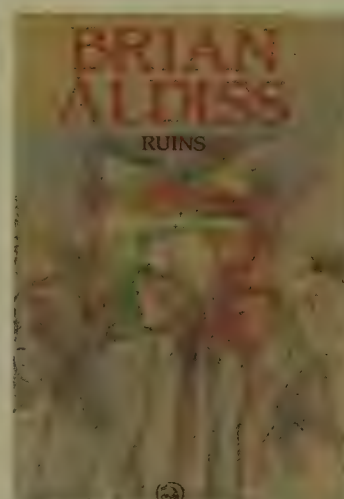
Douglas Bysshe, the aging film matinee idol in A. L. Barker's *The Gooseboy*, leads as secluded a life in the south of France as the curiosity of passing tourists allows. He lives with his housekeeper, a



gardener and the gooseboy, a handsome, but also hideously disfigured, deaf and dumb youth of whom he is possibly the father. He accepts a major film role as a saintly leper doctor in Africa because he feels he is the right person to play a private man forced into a public situation. His sister Dulcie has a brief rapturous affair with the gooseboy after which she is attacked by the geese he looks after.

The scale of this enigmatic novel is too small to do justice to its subject, the attainment of personal fulfilment by embracing the suffering of others. That past mistakes may have to be paid for is a simple moral effectively pointed when Bysshe, whose private life does not seem to have been blameless, finds himself in danger of being profiled by an avenging woman journalist. Dulcie's pursuit of her foolish husband Pike, who has left her for a young girl called Cherrimay, yields some quirky, bedroom comedy (in a Nice hotel) in Ms Barker's distinctive style. Equally distinctive are her dry wit and snatches of lunatic dialogue but the overall impression, despite the seriousness of her underlying theme, is of mannered comedy for its own sake.

In contrast, Brian Aldiss's novella *Ruins*, about the decline, fall and ultimate salvation of a songwriter, has the intensity of a dream—of several dreams in fact. Hugh Billing made a hit with a song called "Side Show" in the 1960s and went on to make a fortune in the music industry. He has



lost his inspiration and his grip on life when his mother's death brings him back from America to London.

The post-burial reception is arranged by an old woman, Gladys Lee, whom he befriends and in whose house there is a reproduction of one of Piranesi's *Views of Rome*. To Billing this picture is a perfect realization of one of his recurrent dreams in which a couple draw him towards a house in a ruined setting but never invite him into it.

Explaining dreams can reduce them to banality. Billing's life, as he slums his way through rented rooms and odd jobs, is certainly in ruins. Getting, as it were, an aerial view of it with the help of the Piranesi he regains a sense of its purpose and design. That his parents had loved him had long been obscured by their lack of consideration—father falling off a ladder and getting killed, mother leaving all her money to a friend. Apparently they are the couple in the dream who would have admitted him to the house if only he had understood.

On a less exalted level is Rose, the supermarket supervisor, with whom Billing settles down happily in a Shepherd's Bush house acquired with money he has inherited from Gladys Lee. Though she understands their basic needs, his preoccupation with *The Psyche And Dream Journeys*, taken from Gladys's bookshelf, is one thing they do not seem likely to share ○

—IAN STEWART

Louis Heren, a correspondent in the Korean War, assesses Max Hastings's account of it; a review of Saul Bellow's latest novel; and biographical books for the Christmas stocking

NON FICTION

The Korean War
by Max Hastings
Michael Joseph, £14.95

OF ALL the many wars fought since the last great war to end war, Korea was one of the bloodiest. More than one million people were killed, the two Koreas were bombed almost back to the Stone Age, and it came to an end only when the United States threatened to use nuclear weapons.

The Soviet-equipped North Korean forces invaded the South in the summer of 1950, and the West had every reason to see it as another phase of communist expansion. Eastern Europe had disappeared behind the Iron Curtain, China had fallen to the communists, and guerrilla wars were being waged in Indo-China and Malaya.

The Americans persuaded the United Nations to resist North Korean aggression, and 13 other member nations sent troops to augment what was essentially an American operation. The war could have been won in three months, but for a monumental error of judgment on the part of General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme allied commander. It was only one of many; in fact, the struggle should be remembered as the War of Errors.

The first was the earlier American decision to exclude the Korean peninsula from its defence perimeter when the Truman Administration had already decided to resist further communist aggression. Stalin was aware of the first decision but not the second, and sanctioned the invasion. The next misjudgment was when the Soviet delegation boycotted the UN Security Council, and without its veto the vote was taken to resist aggression.

The South Korean army was ill-equipped and badly led, and the first Americans to arrive from Japan were occupation troops who had probably spent more time in massage parlours than in training. When I arrived as a war correspondent, replacing a colleague killed in action, it looked as if we would be swept into the sea.

The Inchon landing changed that, and after furious fighting the enemy retreated over the 38th Parallel whence they had come. Seoul, the South Korean capital, was liberated exactly three months after their invasion was launched. I thought that we would all be home for Christmas, but MacArthur had other ideas.

The old soldier was one of the most arrogant men I have met. He was, of course, a great war hero, and had been the *de facto* emperor of Japan for five years. He had a contempt for politicians, including President Truman, and was determined to reunify Korea even if it meant war with China.

Truman was not opposed to occupying part of the North, but ordered MacArthur to stop well before the Chinese frontier. The general ignored his commander-in-chief and advanced to the Yalu river, convinced that the Chinese were too weak to respond. Colonel Willoughby, the chief of intelligence, told me they had only a few thousand troops on the frontier.

Alas, the Chinese had divisions of battle-hardened veterans who turned the flanks of the advancing columns. Most of the UN troops dropped their weapons and ran all the way back to the parallel and beyond. The UN line was eventually stabilized, and the war dragged on to the spring of 1953 and stopped more or less where it had started.

Max Hastings, the editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, has told the grim story very well. He had access to most of the documents and interviewed many of the men who fought, including Chinese. He must now be regarded as one of the most distinguished war historians. Despite the misjudgments and terrible casualties, I agree with his conclusion that the war had to be fought. South Korea was saved from domination, and communist imperialism was blunted. Who knows what would have happened if Stalin had been allowed to get away with it?

One thing is certain. A reunified Korea under a communist regime would have destabilized the entire region, and led inevitably to the rearming of Japan ○

—LOUIS HEREN

CHRISTMAS LIST

The Man Who Fell From The Sky
by William Norris
Viking, £10.95

On July 4, 1928, financier Alfred Loewenstein fell to his death from his private plane when it was crossing the Channel *en route* from Croydon to Brussels. Neither the pilot nor any of his personal staff on the plane saw him fall, or so they said, and though the body was later recovered no thorough investigation of the mystery was carried out and no satisfactory explanation published. William Norris follows all the clues and comes up with a solution that is pure Agatha Christie, but may be true.

Oscar Wilde
by Richard Ellmann
Hamish Hamilton, £15

This is an authoritative and compelling biography of the writer whose work has had more influence on subsequent generations than it did on Wilde's own. There is some new material in Professor Ellmann's account, and some fresh insight, but its main distinction is in its completeness and its understanding of the modernity of its subject.

Jane Austen: Her Life
by Park Honan
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.95

Because she was so conscientiously a private person Jane Austen has always been a severe challenge to biographers. Making use of family material that has only recently come to light, and his own scholarly insight and knowledge of what has already been published, Professor Honan has written a very full and satisfying account of the life—which was less uneventful than has often been portrayed—and times of this most acute observer of Regency England.

Horatio Nelson
by Tom Pocock
The Bodley Head, £15

Tom Pocock, who has written four previous books on Nelson, convincingly proves with this biography that there is room for another. Not only has he found new material which will be of the greatest interest to those already

steeped in the subject, but he captures the spirit and the character of the man with such felicity that even the most sceptical of readers will understand and rejoice in Nelson's greatness.

Jack The Ripper: The Bloody Truth
by Melvin Harris
Columbus Books, £14.95

The Ripper Legacy
by Martin Howells and Keith Skinner
Sidgwick & Jackson, £12.95

Jack The Ripper: Summing Up and Verdict
by Colin Wilson and Robin Odell
Bantam Press, £12.95

Next year sees the centenary of Jack the Ripper's reign of terror in the East End of London, and already three books have been published. They will doubtless be followed by many others in the next 12 months, but it is unlikely that any will get any nearer the truth than these, each of which comes to a different conclusion. Howells and Skinner name Montague Druitt as the murderer. Harris eliminates him and nominates Dr Roslyn D'Onston, whose real surname was Stephenson. Wilson and Odell put all the suspects in the dock and conclude that the jury must be directed to find them all not guilty. After 100 years we still cannot be sure of the truth.

Charles Mackerras: A Musician's Musician
by Nancy Phelan
Gollancz, £16.95

No one who has experienced the excitement that Mackerras's presence in the pit can generate in an opera house would argue with the orchestra manager who described him as "the best all-round operatic conductor in Europe". His fruitful seven years as music director of English National Opera, his championing of Janáček, his concern for textual authenticity in the operas of Handel and Mozart, are some of the landmarks in an action-packed 'life—from early years in Australia through a career that has taken him all over the world—that is charted with humour and affection by Sir Charles's cousin ○

The capital list

A discerning guide to entertainment in the city



Blind French pianist Bernard d'Ascoli gives a recital at the Wigmore Hall. Michael Clark freaks out at Sadler's Wells. Costume for another airy

THEATRE

ILN ratings
******Highly recommended
*****Worth seeing

... And Then There Were None

Agatha Christie's thriller with Jack Hedley, Rodney Beves, Miriam Karlin, John Fraser, Glynis Barber & Geoffrey Davies. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 5122, cc).

Back with a Vengeance. Barry Humphries outrages & entertains, torments & flings "gladdies" at his audience. Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (836 2600, cc).

Beyond Reasonable Doubt. In Jeffrey Archer's courtroom drama Frank Finlay plays the Chairman of the Board accused of murdering his wife. With Wendy Craig & Andrew Cresswell. Paintings, stuff, Cruickshank. Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (734 1166, cc). REVIEWED NOV. 1987.

Strangers. David Edgar's expansive community play about the clash of wills between a 19th-century Dorchester brewer's proprietress (Judi Dench) & an evangelical parson (Tim Pigott-Smith). Audiences are expected to move around with the action. Courtessie, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

Fathers & Sons. Turgenev's novel of

mid-19th-century Russia in a richly faithful, if selective, version by Brian Friel & with imaginative performances by Alec McCowen, Richard Pasco & most affectingly, Robin Bailey. Lyttelton, National Theatre.

***Follies.** Tremendous line-up of stars for this musical. Southend fans will love the music—others might be disappointed by the feeble storyline. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Ave, WC2 (379 5399, cc 379 4444). REVIEWED SEPT. 1987.

Girlfriends. New musical by Howard Goodall, set on a Second World War British bomber-command base, re-opens the Playhouse. Hazel O'Connor plays a WAAF. Playhouse, Northumberland Ave, SW1 (839 4401, cc 240 7200). REVIEWED OCT. 1987.

***Groucho: A Life in Revue.** The story of the Marx brothers, particularly Groucho, directed by his son Arthur, who has written a witty autobiography with Robert Fisher. Comedy, Pantons St, SW1 (930 2578, cc).

J. J. Farr. Alford Finney & Bob Beck in a play about a former Catholic priest, released after being held hostage. Phoenix, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (836 2294, cc).

***Lettice & Lovage.** Peter Shaffer's play is this year's most original comedy as it's a pastiche of a romantic comic. Maggie Smith, seen first as a guide to a stately home, is a confirmed romantic who way of embroidering

historical fact can get her into difficulties. Globe, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3667, cc 141 9999).

A Lie of the Mind. A distinguished cast, including Paul McGann, Miranda Richardson & Geraldine McEwan, try to get on in Sam Shepard's new play about relationships. Royal Court, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 1745, cc).

The Life of Napoleon. Comedian & impressionist John Sessions brings the great emperor (& a few others) to life. Until Dec 5. Albery, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3878, cc 379 6565).

***A Man For All Seasons.** Frank Hurst's revival of Robert Bolt's play, up on Chichester, now has Charlton Heston as Thomas More. It is good, though it is a shame that Tony Britton is no longer in it. Excellent work by Benjamin Whitrow, Gwen Watford, & Jack Lynn. Roy Kinnear is exceptional as the controversial Common Man. Savoy, Strand, WC2 (836 8888, 379 6219, cc).

One For the Road. After a briskly comic first act Willy Russell's farce slips away in spite of the vigour of its company. Set in a "dormer bunglow" on a residentially aspirational housing estate, it gives Russ Abbot his head as a man thoroughly tired of his surroundings. Lynn, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3686, cc).

The Rover. John Barton's hilarious staging of Alpha Beta's restoration romp, starring Jeremy Irons & Stephanie Beacham. Mermaid, Puddle Dock, EC4 (236 5568, cc).

***Serious Youngs.** Caryl Churchill's brilliant comedy of City business framed, surprisingly, in rhyme. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (836 3028, cc 379 6565).

A Small Family Business. Ayckbourn's comedy about corruption in a family business grows steadily blacker, ending with a denouement that is hard to accept. Stephen Moore now takes the lead. Olivier, National Theatre.

***A View From the Bridge.** Alan Ayckbourn has made a good job of directing Miller's near-classic. Aldwych, WC2 (836 6044, cc).

Waiting for Godot. Alec McCowen & John Alderton play Samuel Beckett's two tramps. Lyttelton, National Theatre.

***The Winter's Tale.** With some fresh casting, Terry Hands's practically all-white production from 1986 Stratford has moved easily to London. It is notable for the way in which the play—Paul Shelley is a man of the Leontes—can manage the difficult Shakespearean syntax. Barbican EC2 (638 8891, 628 8795, cc).

FIRST NIGHTS

The Foreigner. Comedy from Larry Shaw. Nichols Lyndhurst stars. Opere

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PANTOMIMES

Babes in the Wood. Cannon & Ball play the two brothers in a £1 million Christmas spectacular. Dec 21-Feb 27. London Palladium, Argyle St, W1 (437 7373, cc).

Lyle. New musical by Charles Strouse about a family who move to Brooklyn and find a crocodile (Lyle) in their bathroom. Dec 3-Jan 9. Lyric Hammer-smith, King St, W6 (741 2311, cc).

Mother Goose. Danny La Rue shimmers on. Dec 14-Jan 16. Churchill, High St, Bromley (460 6677, cc).

Peter Pan. Lulu & George Cole take the leads. Until Jan 30. Cambridge, Earham St, WC2 (379 5299, cc).

The Pied Piper. Sylvester McCoy guides the rats & the children out of Hamelin. Until Jan 20. Olivier/Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

DANCE

Michael Clark & Company. A brand new show from the controversial Clark. Dec 16-Jan 2. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (278 8916, cc).

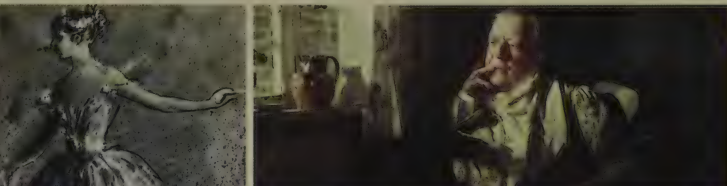
London Contemporary Dance Theatre. A diverse & lively programme including world premieres of new work by Christopher Bannerman & Paul Chamberlain set to music by Man Jumping. Dec 1-3. Sadler's Wells.

London Festival Ballet. Peter Schaufuss's complicated production of *The Nutcracker*, which relates incidents & personalities in Tchaikovsky's life with events in the story of Clara & her nutcracker. Dec 26-Jan 16. Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

Royal Ballet. Peter Wright's production of the great classic, *Swan Lake*, 1, 2, 5 (2pm), 7, 14. Triple Bill. Audiences' translation to dance of Shakespeare's fantasy of fairies & mortals. Dec 18-Feb 7. Wimbledon, The Broadway, SW19 (540 0362, cc).

Winnie-the-Pooh. A. Milne's stories about the Bear of Very Little Brain. Until Jan 31. Royalty, Portugal St, WC2 (831 0660, cc).

Not to be missed... *Rigoletto* at the Coliseum until January 21, and John Huston's last film *The Dead*. Stay clear of... *Girlfriends* at the Playhouse, yet another West End musical with a feeble story



spirit, the Godmother in the Royal Ballet's new production of Cinderella. Alec Guinness plays William Dorrit in the six-hour film Little Dorrit

STAYERS

****Antony & Cleopatra.** Olivier, National Theatre (928 2252); ***Chess.** New London (405 0072); ***Cats.** Prince Edward (734 8951); ***42nd Street.** Drury Lane (836 8107); ***High Society.** Victoria Palace (834 1317); ***The Kiss.** Old Vic (929 7610); ***Les Liaisons Dangereuses.** Ambassadors (836 6111); ***Me & My Girl.** Adelphi (836 7611); ***Les Misérables.** Palace (434 0909); ***The Mousetrap.** St Martin's (836 1443); ***The Phantom of the Opera.** Her Majesty's (928 2244); ***Run For Your Life.** Criterion (390 3216); ***Starlight Express.** Apollo Victoria (828 8665); ***Three Men on a Horse.** Vaudeville (836 9987).

FRINGE

Between East & West. An actress & theatre director defect to New York. Opens Dec 16. Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (722 9244).

The Cape Orchard. Michael Picard's tale depicts a future South Africa. Dec 8-19. Young Vic Studio, The Cui, SE1 (928 6363, cc 379 4444).

The Midnight Cantata. A bawdy satire by Mary McGuckian, based on Merriman's 18th-century Irish poem. Until Dec 12. Jacob St Studios, Mill St, SE1 (ickets: 379 4444, cc).

An Outbreak of God in Area Nine. Humourist Ken Campbell & his troupe

microbe size & injected into Martin Short, an innocent, whimsical supermarket worker, who suddenly finds an inner voice motivating him. Que Dante directs with verve and Quaid is an engaging comedy actor. Opens Nov 27. Warner West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1334).

The Kitchen Tote (15). The story of a black boy employed in a white policeman's house in Kenya in 1950, during the fight for independence. Directed by Harry Hoek, with Bob Peck, Phyllis Logan & Edwin Mahinda in the lead

roles. Opens Nov 27. Cannons Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (636 6148), Haymarket, W1 (839 1527). REVIEW ON P. 70.

***Little Dorrit (U).** Six hours of one of Dickens's lesser novels might seem more suitable as a television serial, but Christine Ebersole's loving evocation of the subject matter is a formidable achievement, abetted by a vast array of actors headed by Alec Guinness, Denis Hare, John Gielgud, Kenneth Wall, and Cyril Cusack, with tiny Sarah Pickering totally believable in

the title role. The story, set in the prime of the Victorian railway share boom, when a man might be rolling in opulence one day & in the Marshalsea debtor's prison the next, has implications for today. Opens Dec 11. Curzon West End, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (439 4805, cc).

Made in Heaven (PG). Alan Rudolph turns to a whimsical view of heaven, with newly dead Timothy Hutton killing for unborn Kelly's heaven, and then drifting across America in reincarnated form looking for her. The

CINEMA

The following films are expected to be shown in London on or general release at some time during the month. Programmes often change at short notice. Consult a local or daily newspaper for exact location & times.

***Bigfoot & The Hendersons (PG).** An amiable comedy, directed by William Dear, in which a Seattle family led by John Lithgow & Meg Dillon find a "bigfoot" monster in the woods &

introduce it to urban life. An ET variant which originated in the Steven Spielberg camp. Opens Dec 11. Plaza, Lower Regent St, SW1 (200 0200, cc 240 7200).

****Cry Freedom (PG).** Richard Attenborough's story of Steven Biko, the black activist who died in police custody in Rhodesia in 1977, & Donald Woods the white liberal who befriended him. Opens Nov 27. Empire, Leicester Sq, WC2 (200 0200, cc 240 7200). REVIEW ON P. 70.

***The Dead (U).** John Huston's last

film, adapted by his son Tony from James Joyce's story in *Dubliners*, is exquisitely told. Opens Dec 11. Lumiere, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 0991, cc). REVIEW ON P. 70.

Eat the Rich (18). Peter Richardson of the Comic Strip has co-written and directed this savage view of an alternative Britain where the Home Secretary is a brutal thug, DISS clerks sneer at the dole line and a transsexual runs a restaurant where yuppie cutes yuppies. Terry Gilliam did it better, with *Brazil*, but there is still a strong

hint of Swiftian thrust in the satire.

***Housekeeping (PG).** Bill Forsyth's first American film, from a novel by Marilynne Robinson, describes how two orphaned teenage girls in the 1950s live with an eccentric aunt who never throws away newspapers or empty tins. Forsyth's offbeat approach only just works this time. Opens Dec 4. Chelsea, 206 Kings Rd, SW3 (351 3742, cc). Renoir, Brunswick Sq, WC1 (837 8402, cc).

***Innocence (PG).** In a top-secret experiment Dennis Quaid is shrunk to

microbe size & injected into Martin Short, an innocent, whimsical supermarket worker, who suddenly finds an inner voice motivating him. Que Dante directs with verve and Quaid is an engaging comedy actor. Opens Nov 27. Warner West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1334).

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celestial world seems as banal as the earthly one.

***Maurice (15).** Merchant Ivory film, based on the E. M. Forster novel. REVIEWED NOV. 1987.

***Wish You Were Here (15).** Writer David Leyland makes his directorial debut, with a calculated, jaundiced view of a stuffy seaside resort in early 1950s Britain, in which a free-and-easy teenager, played by Emily Lloyd, comes to a head with a local boy, and then drifts across America in reincarnated form looking for her. The

A soldier of the terracotta army stops off for a kip at the Old Agricultural Halls before resuming his European tour. One of Ernst Dryden's

MUSIC

ALBERT HALL
Kensington Gore, SW7 (S89 8212, cc S89 9465).

Carols for Christmas London Pro Arte Choir, English Baroque Choir, Orian Ellis, harp, Tomos Ellis, tenor, Tristan Fry, percussion, Malcolm Hicks, organ, conducted by Leon Lovett. Dec 6, 20, 23pm.

Bach Choir, London Bach, Kneller Hall Trumpeters, John Scott, organ, conducted by David Wilcocks. Family carols for choir and audience. Dec 6, 20, 23pm.

St Bartholomew's Hospital Choral Society, Philharmonia Orchestra, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, under Robert Anderson. Dec 15, 7.30pm.

Royal Choral Society Three carol concerts with John Birch, organ, fanfare trumpeters of HM Royal Marines, conductor Laszlo Hellay. Dec 18, 7.30pm; Dec 19, 2.30pm, 7.30pm.

Alexandra Choir, Southern Sinfonietta, conducted by David Hill, with guest choirs, handbell ringers, Geoffrey Morgan, organ. Carols for choir & audience. Dec 20, 7.30pm.

BARBICAN HALL, EC2 (638 8891, 628 8795, cc).

Philharmonia Orchestra, Antonio de Almeida conducts Lalo, Ravel, Camille Saint-Saëns, Dec 3, 7.45pm.

Adriana Lecocquer, Concert performance by the English Chamber Orchestra, London Oriana Choir, under Maximiano Valdes, with Natalia Troitskaya, Cleopatra Curcio, Giacomo Aragall, Vincenzo Sardore. Dec 7, 7.15pm.

English Chamber Orchestra, Jeffrey Tate conducts Mozart's Symphony No 40 & Requiem. Dec 8, 7.45pm.

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Simon Rattle conducts Berg, Stravinsky, & the first London performance of Dutilleul's Violin Concerto, with Isaac Stern. Dec 10, 7.15pm.

English Baroque Choir & Orchestra, Christmas music, including Bach, Corelli, Mozart, Handel & carols. Dec 11, 7.45pm.

National Bach Orchestra, National Westminster Choir perform Bach's Christmas Oratorio. Dec 15, 7pm.

City of King's College, Cambridge, English Chamber Orchestra, Nicholas Cleobury conducts Britten, Buxtehude, Albinoni & carols. Dec 19, 7.45pm.

City of London Sinfonia, Richard Hickox, Singers perform Mozart's arrangement of Handel's Messiah, under Richard Hickox. Dec 19, 7.15pm.

London Symphony Orchestra, King's Singers, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, carols & Christmas music. Dec 21, 7.15pm.

FESTIVAL HALL, South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

Philharmonia Orchestra & Chorus, Simon Preston conducts Handel's Messiah. Dec 7, 2.30pm.

London Concert Orchestra, Tallis Chamber Choir, with Eirian Davies, soprano, Handel, Bach, Gould, Purcell, Schubert & carols for choir & audience. Dec 7, 3.30pm.

Alfred Brendel, piano, gives four recitals of Schubert's piano works, ranging from the Wanderer Fantasy, D675 to the Sonata in B flat, D960. Dec 6.13, 3.15pm; Dec 8.15, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic Orchestra & Choir, Georg Solti conducts Handel's Messiah, with Margaret Price, soprano. Dec 6, 7.30pm.

RBC Symphony Orchestra, Günter Wand conducts Mozart's Symphony No 33 & Bruckner's Symphony No 3. Dec 9, 7.30pm.

Massed Choirs from London Hospitals, conducted by Charles Farmcombe, with Nigel Kennedy, violin, & Ian Currier, organ. Christmas carols. Dec 12, 12pm, 7.30pm.

Goldsmiths' Choral Union, with Christopher Bowers-Broadbent, organ. Brian Wright conducts carols for choir & audience. Dec 13, 7.30pm.

Philharmonia Orchestra, Cantata Maria Giulini conducts an all-Schumann programme, with Radu Lupu as soloist in the Piano Concerto. Dec 18, 7.30pm; Dec 20, 3.15pm.

John Strauss Orchestra & Dancers perform music of the Strauss family, directed from the violin by John Bradbury. Dec 21, 3pm, 7.30pm.

LONDON ELIZABETH HALL, South Bank Centre.

Bach Bach Orchestra & Singers, Nicholas Kraemer directs works by Bach, Torelli, Albinoni, Handel, all composed in 1707. Dec 4, 7.45pm.

Glyndebourne Touring Opera, The *Service of The Electrification of the Port of Union* by Nigel Osborne. Dec 7, 7.45pm, 8.15pm, 9.15pm.

King's College School Choir, Wren Opera's *Christmas*, with Alan Opie, baritone, perform Christmas music & carols for audience participation. Dec 8, 7.45pm.

Queen Elizabeth Players, Jane Glover

conducts works by Haydn, Mozart & David Matthews & has a pre-concert discussion with Matthews. Dec 9, 7.45pm.

London Bach Society, Steinitz Bach Players, Concluding concert in the LBS cycle of Bach cantatas, conducted by Paul Steinitz. Dec 12, 7.45pm.

English Chamber Orchestra, Jeffrey Tate conducts Schoenberg, Mozart & Bruch's Violin Concerto No 1, with Nigel Kennedy. Dec 14, 7.45pm.

Medieval Christmas Extravaganza, New London Consort, directed by Philip Eckert, perform carols, songs, dances & music from the time when there were "12 days of Christmas". Dec 21, 7.45pm. Medieval entertainments in the foyer from 5.30pm.

Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Iona Brown directs six Concerti Grossi from L'estro armonico by Vivaldi. Dec 22, 7.45pm.

Monsieur Offenbach's Christmas Party: Staged excerpts from his operettas & operas, performed by the London Concert Orchestra, Chorus & Dancers. Dec 26-Jan 3, 7.45pm; Sun mat 3pm.

ST JOHN'S, SW1 (222 0661, cc).

London Mozart Players perform Corelli's Christmas Concerto & works by Pergolesi & Vivaldi. Dec 2, 7.30pm.

Robert Hoult, recorder, Marlon Whitehead, harpsichord, play music as visitors to 18th-century London, including Baroque, Cabezón, Finger, Handel, Sammartini. Dec 7, 7.30pm.

Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner conducts concert performances of Purcell's *Diocelean* & the incidental music to *Diocleian*. Dec 10, 7.30pm.

The Sixteen Choir & Orchestra, under Harry Christophers, give four performances of Handel's Messiah. Dec 11, 12.15, 16, 7pm.

Choir & Orchestra of St John's, conducted by John Lubbock, give two concerts of Christmas music, including Britten's St Nicholas cantata & carols. Dec 21, 7.30pm; Dec 22, 3.30pm.

WIGMORE HALL, St Wigmore St, W1 (935 2141, cc).

Marius May, cello, Paul Hamburger, piano, Boccherini, Bach, Debussy, Schumann, Dvořák. Dec 1, 7.30pm.

Nash Ensemble, with Sarah Walker, mezzo soprano, perform works by Boulez, Roussel, Delage, Ravel, in their Paris 1867-1987 series. Dec 2, 7.30pm.

Three Singing Ladies of Rome: Jill Feldman, Agnes Mellon, Isabelle Poulard, soprano, sing madrigals & motets by Cansini, Rossi, Mazzocchi, Marazziti, & to sixth century, Leonora, Catarina & Andreana Baroni. Dec 3, 7.30pm.

Bernard d'Ascoli, piano, plays Faure, Messiaen, Franck, Ravel, Debussy. Dec 6, 6pm.

Margaret Price, soprano; Geoffrey Parsons, piano; Mozart, Schubert, Mahler, Strauss. Dec 8, 7.30pm.

Gothic Voices, directed by Christopher Page, perform madrigals, ballade, & French songs from Italy, 1330-1430. Dec 9, 7.30pm.

The Wigmore Christmas Cracker: a feast of music & surprises featuring the Cambridge Buskers, Hughes Cudmore, tenor, Peter Donohoe, piano, Nash Ensemble of carols. Dec 12, 7.30pm.

Peter Frankl, piano, Schubert, Chopin. Dec 30, 7.30pm.

Songmakers' Almanac: 1888. Songs by Wolf, Debussy, Tchaikovsky, Faure, Brahms, composed 100 years ago. Dec 31, 7.30pm.

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designs for sale at Bonhams. Tempting tigress: a prototype for a mosaic of Eve from the Whitefriars glass show at the Museum of London

EXHIBITIONS

BARBICAN
EC2 (638 4411).

The Edwardian Era. The first major exploration of art & society during the reign of Edward VII, with more than 700 exhibits. The theme is developed through painting, sculpture, architecture, drawing, advertising, political posters, trade-union banners, news photography & old newspapers. All the great Edwardian themes will be covered, from the apogee of Empire to the Labour movement and women's suffrage. Until Feb 7. Tues-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Sun noon-5.45pm.

BRITISH MUSEUM
Great Russell St, WC1 (636 1555).

Glass of the Caesars. The work of highly skilled Roman glass-makers—fifty centuries ago to sixth century—has been brought together from major collections. Until March 6. Mon-Sat 10am-4.30pm, Sun 2.30-5.30pm. £1.50, concessions 50p.

DRYDEN STREET GALLERY
5 Dryden St, WC1 (240 2430).

Rogues' Gallery. A one-woman exhibition by Sue Dryden, featuring her extraordinary pictures of secentric Londoners. Dec 7-18. Mon-Fri 9am-6pm.

NICOLA JACOBS GALLERY
9 Cork St, W1 (437 3868).

David Mach. One of the most controversial sculptors—remember his Polaris submarine made of old car tyres on the South Bank in 1983—David Mach now makes a large-scale work especially for a commercial gallery. The materials will be "thousands of china dogs & railway track". Until Dec 23. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

George Melly & John Chilton's Feetwarmers. The singer & raucous taster up residence. Dec 7-Jan 2. Ronnie Scott's.

Keith Nichols Red Hot Syncopters. Back for the third time with their celebration of the work of King Oliver & Jelly Roll Morton. Dec 5. Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Plan B. Infectious mix of jazz, Latin & soul. Dec 1. Bass Clef, 85 Coronet St, NI (29 2440).

TEMPERANCE SEVEN. Up-front jazz from this lively British crew. Dec 13. 100 Club, 100 Oxford St, W1 (636 0933).

ROYAL ACADEMY
Piccadilly, W1 (734 9052).

Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400. On show here is a magnificent display of more than 600 works of Gothic art. Included are the Crown of Blanche (daughter of Henry IV), stained-glass windows, jewels,

manuscripts, misericordes, armour & on a humble note, pottery. Until March 6. Daily 10am-6pm. £4, concessions £2.

SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALLERY
21 Kensington Park Rd, W11 (221 3489).

Ewan Fraser: One Man Show. Surreal photographic work of one of Britain's most innovative new talents. Dec 2-31. Mon-Sat 10am-6.30pm.

TATE GALLERY
Millbank, SW1 (621 1313).

Manners & Morals: Hogarth & British Painting. An attempt to show how a native school of painting emerged in England during the first half of the 18th century. The core of the exhibition is a series of more than 30 paintings by Hogarth. Until Jan 3. Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun 2-5.30pm.

THEATRE MUSEUM
Russell St, WC2 (836 7891).

John Gielgud: a celebration of his work. A well-deserved tribute to one of Britain's best-loved actors. Until Aug 28. 1988. Tues-Sun 11am-7pm. £2.25, concessions £1.25.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM
Cromwell Rd, SW7 (589 6371).

Salvatore Ferragamo: The Art of the Shoe 1927-60. Foot fetishists of the world unite. Here's a real treat for you. High-fashion footwear with over 200 of Ferragamo's creations on display. Until Feb 7. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2.30-5.50pm. Voluntary donation, suggested £2, concessions 50p.

CHRISTIE WOOD GALLERY
15 Motcomb St, SW1 (235 9141).

Sally Matfield. Architectural & garden watercolours. Dec 8-23. Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

Dec 13, 14. Hammersmith Odeon, W6 (748 4081).

Alison Moyet. An enduring talent, her live shows blending familiar pop with both jazz covers & the kind of hard-edged rock that suits her rosy voice. Dec 1, 2. Wembley Arena.

Squeeze. What once seemed wary has gone away. Difford & Tilbrook serve up a cosy product but the re-run falls to excite. Dec 28, 29. Albert Hall, SW7 (589 8212, cc).

Suzanne Vega. Bedouin blues from the moody Greenwich Village folkie. Dec 6. Wembley Arena.

OPERA

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA
London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, cc 240 5258).

The Barber of Seville. Jonathan Miller's first Rossini staging, with Alan Opie as Figaro, Della Jones as Rosina. Dec 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 15, 18, 23, 30.

***Rigoletto**. John Raval's singing the title role in Jonathan Miller's hit production, with Arthur Davies as the Duke & Gretel. Mark Elder conducts David Pountney's new production,

designed by Stefanos Lazaridis; Ethna Robinson & Catherine Pope sing the title roles, with Felicity Palmer as the Viscountess. Dec 16, 19, 22, 29, 31.

ROYAL OPERA
Covent Garden, WC2 (240 0666, cc).

Tosca. Eva Marton sings the title role for the first time in this evergreen production, with Peter Dinkov & Ingmar Wixell. Nov 26, 30, Dec 5, 8, 11.

L'elisir d'amore. John Copley's production, in Denis Bontros's colourful designs, returns with Yvonne Kenny as Adina, Dénis Gajdos as Nemorino. Dec 10, 12, 15, 18, 22, 30.

AFTER DARK

Chuckie Club. One of the friendlier alternative comedy venues, compared as ever by Eugene Chesler. Saturdays. The Black Horse, 6 Rathbone Pl, W1 (476 1672).

Jongleurs. Major comedy club trading in the new variety. Expect a bill mixing jugglers, musical acts & alternative comedy in a fashion not a million miles removed from the Swiss music halls.

Lavender Gdns, SW11 (585 0955).

Shakespeare. The revamped Palais now packing them in with the classic soul/funk fusion. Le Palais, 242 Shepherd's Bush Rd, W6 (748 2812).

Linealight. Ultra-trendy London version of a New York vision. Different music & theme each night. 136 Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (445 0372).

Old White Horse. Regular venue for the best in new variety. Fridays, 261 Brixton Rd, SW9 (487 3440).

South of Deftford. Consistently coming up with some of the strongest comedy bills on the alternative circuit. Saturdays. Trambull, 51 Woolwich New Rd, SE18 (855 3371).

JAZZ

Betty Carter. Premier American jazz vocalist with a week of gigs. Until Dec 16. Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith St, W1 (439 0747).

Alan Eldon & his All-Star Jazz Band. Disraeli & Swing from the redoubtable trumpeter. Dec 19. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

Syd Lawrence Orchestra. Their annual Glenn Miller anniversary concert. Dec 12. Wembley Conference Centre, W1 (636 0933).



National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. The Queen's House, centre, is said to be haunted by a stooped, cowed figure stalking the main stairway

LIST OF THE MONTH

HAUNTED LONDON

It is traditional to have a ghost story at Christmas & where better to look than the grisly history of London itself? Here is the *ILN's* pick of the capital's ghosties & ghoulies...

1 St Peter ad Vincula, Tower of London, EC3. Tudor burial place for executed prisoners, including Anne Boleyn. In 1876 Queen Victoria ordered the floor to be taken up so that the remains beneath be reinterred in decent fashion. A staggering 200 bodies were found, the disturbed spirits of whom now roam the building.

2 British Museum, WC1. Dare you enter the Egyptian room? Exhibit 22542 is a mummy case so cursed, according to legend, that to look upon it results in terrible illness & death. All, of course, denied by the Museum.

3 The Grenadier pub, 18 Wilton Row,

SW1. One night, so the tale goes, a young officer was caught cheating at cards & dragged by his fellow Grenadiers to the cellar for "punishment". There he was flogged so savagely he died. His ghost, complete with old-fashioned uniform, is now a pub regular.

4 The London Underground. There are some 20 unused tube stations through which trains roar past darkened platforms fluttering with ancient posters. Many drivers have reported shadowy figures moving around.

5 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, WC2. A slim, handsome man in a grey suit & hat materializes at the back of the stalls only at the beginning of a successful run. A good omen for once.

6 The Spaniard's Inn, Hampstead Lane, NW3. Favourite hideout of highwayman Dick Turpin. His spirit is still there, & so too is that of his trusty steed, *Black Bess*, which on quiet nights can be heard galloping furiously across the heath.

7 The King's Arms pub, 132 Peckham Rye, SE15. Habitat of spooks of more recent origin, the pub sustained a direct hit in the blitz. Neighbours have since reported disembodied voices singing "Lilli Marlene" to the sound of honky-tonk piano.

8 Westminster Abbey, SW1. One of the Abbey's many ghosts is a Benedictine monk who glides along at 6 inches above the ground—the level of the original flooring.

9 The Queen's House, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, SE10. Now the central building of the museum, the house is the home of a "stooped, cowed figure" photographed in 1930 climbing the main staircase. Ace ghostbuster Peter Underwood recently tried, in vain, to obtain its handprint by smearing the entire length of the banister with vaseline.

10 Pond Square, Highgate, N6. Said to be haunted by a phantom chicken, no less, which runs around headless flapping its wings.

OTHER EVENTS

Christmas Collection. Buy or browse at the Crafts Council's exhibition of high-quality jewellery, pottery, ceramics etc. Special commissions can be arranged. Until Jan 3. 12 Waterloo Place, SW1 (930 4811).

Cinderella Ball. Annual charity event in aid of the NSPCC. Dec 10. The Savoy, WC2. Information: NSPCC, London Appeals (242 1626).

Ernst Dryden Archive. Classic artwork from the 1920s & 30s. Dryden worked mainly in the field of advertising & fashion design, & more than 3,000 of his original pieces will be up for sale. Dec 2, 2pm. Bonham's, Montpelier St, SW7 (584 9161).

Impressionist & Modern Painting & Sculpture. Major sale including work by Matisse, Braque & Modigliani. Among several Picassos is his 1912 *Souvenir du Havre*, expected to fetch £3-4 million. Dec 1, 7pm. Sotheby's, 34/35 New Bond St, W1 (493 8080).

BOOKS: THIS MONTH'S BEST SELLERS

HARDBACK NON FICTION

1 (—) **Oscar Wilde** by Richard Ellman. Hamish Hamilton, £11.95. Major biography of a colourful figure in British cultural life.

2 (—) **Behind the Wall: A Journey Through China** by Colin Thubron. Heinemann, £12.95. This sad travel book is full of enthralling encounters.

3 (—) **This 'n' That** by Bette Davis. Sidgwick & Jackson, £12.95. A living legend cuts like a razor.

4 (—) **The Discovery of the Titanic** by Robert D. Ballard. Hodder & Stoughton, £16.95.

5 (2) **Floyd on France** by Keith Floyd. BBC, £11.95. A rich meal: safer to read about than eat.

6 (—) **The Korean War** by Max Hastings. Michael Joseph, £14.95. A hugely readable account.

7 (—) **Round Ireland in Low Gear** by Eric Newby. Collins, £12.95. Ireland from the grass roots.

8 (—) **Marilyn Monroe: An Appreciation** by Eve Arnold. Hamish Hamilton, £15.

9 (—) **The Victorian Kitchen Garden** by Jennifer Davies. BBC, £10.95.

10 (—) **God Bless Her: A Life of the Queen Mother** by Robert Lacey. Century, £10.95.

PAPERBACK NON FICTION

1 (3) **Floyd on France** by Keith Floyd. BBC, £6.95.

2 (—) **Rock Hudson: His Story** by Rock Hudson & Sara Davidson. Bantam Books, £3.95.

3 (10) **Ultimate Alphabet** by Mike Wilks. Pavilion Books, £5.95. 7,777 objects hidden in 26 paintings. Identifier of the largest number nets £10,000.

4 (1) **Five Hundred Mile Walkies** by Mark Wallington. Arrow, £2.50. A hike along Britain's longest coastal footpath.

5 (—) **No Direction Home** by Robert Shelton. Penguin, £4.95. A huge account of a major figure in the pop mythology.

6 (—) **Fish Course** by Susan Hicks. BBC, £6.95.

7 (—) **AA Big Road Atlas of Britain**. Automobile Association, £4.95.

8 (—) **Khashoggi** by Ronald Kessler. Corgi, £3.95. A reasonable account of the once richest man in the world.

9 (5) **Chinese Cookery** by Ken Hom. BBC, £5.25.

10 (—) **How to be a Complete Bastard** by Adrian Edmondson. Virgin Books, £3.95. Some people don't need a handbook.

HARDBACK FICTION

1 (—) **Hot Money** by Dick Francis. Michael Joseph, £10.95.

2 (6) **Chatterton** by Peter Ackroyd. Hamish Hamilton, £10.95. An inventive but not totally successful interpretation of the death of a poet.

3 (4) **The Book and the Brotherhood** by Iris Murdoch. Chatto & Windus, £11.95.

4 (—) **Colour of Blood** by Brian Moore. Cape, £10.95. Thoughtful, exciting novel about a Polish primate who narrowly escapes assassination.

5 (—) **The Day of Creation** by J. G. Ballard. Victor Gollancz, £10.95. Visionary novel set in drought-blighted Central Africa.

6 (1) **A Friend from England** by Anita Brookner. Cape, £9.95.

7 (—) **The New Confessions** by William Boyd. Hamish Hamilton, £11.95. Has close parallels to Rousseau's *Confessions*.

8 (7) **Misery** by Stephen King. Hodder & Stoughton, £11.95. Horror, claustrophobia and suspense.

9 (—) **Firefly Summer** by Maeve Binchy. Century, £9.95.

10 (9) **Rage** by Wilbur Smith. Heinemann, £11.95. The battle rages round apartheid.

PAPERBACK FICTION

1 (—) **It** by Stephen King. New English Library, £4.50. The evil menace confronted by a gang of children from Maine.

2 (—) **Night of the Fox** by Jack Higgins. Pan Books, £2.95.

3 (—) **Perfume** by Patrick Suskind. Penguin, £3.95. Original book about an ugly child with a heavenly sense of smell.

4 (1) **A Matter of Honour** by Jeffrey Archer. Coronet, £2.95.

5 (—) **Down our Street** by Lena Kennedy. Futura, £2.50. East End sentiment rides high.

6 (—) **Bill Bailey** by Catherine Cookson. Corgi, £2.95. Tyneside in the 1980s.

7 (2) **Hollywood Husbands** by Jackie Collins. Pan Books, £3.50.

8 (4) **A Misalliance** by Anita Brookner. Grafton Books, £2.75.

9 (—) **Redback** by Howard Jacobson. Black Swan, £3.95. A splendid display of pyrotechnics, set in Australia.

10 (—) **O-Zone** by Paul Theroux. Penguin, £3.95. Set in a post-nuclear-disaster age.

Brackets show last month's position. Information from Book Trust. Comments by Martyn Goff.

FARAH





A

B

C

JERMYN STREET SHIRT OFFER

The Illustrated London News has joined with Hilditch & Key, famous Jermyn Street shirtmakers, to bring readers a very special offer

JERMYN STREET is the home of shirtmaking and the home of Hilditch & Key, one of London's oldest and finest shirtmakers.

Charles Hilditch & Graham Key opened their first shop in 1899. Their shirts soon became favourites with the fashionable London gentry, and today their garments are prerequisites of every gentleman's wardrobe—renowned for the quality of craftsmanship and finished product. And, over recent years, a ladies' collection has been introduced.

The shirts are cut by hand: the bodies with shears, the collars with a knife. The high stitch count gives clean, strong seams. The collars, which are the most important part of a shirt, are turned by hand and have removable stiffeners. The buttons are real pearl and the finished shirts are pressed by hand. Most of the cloths are top-quality twofold poplin woven in a Lancashire mill used since the company's foundation. Mr Finch, the company chairman, personally designs the fabrics which make up two collections per year of worldwide exclusives.

The shirts illustrated are just three examples of the extensive range available. Plain shirts, classic stripes, evening shirts, casual shirts are all made to the same high standards. Any reader taking this page into one of the Hilditch & Key shops (87, 73 or 37 Jermyn Street) will be entitled to free monogramming (worth around £10) or a free pair of silk cufflinks with each shirt purchased. It will also give you the chance to see the Hilditch & Key accessories: exclusive ties, pyjamas, robes, nightshirts, socks and smoking jackets to name but a few.

Obviously it won't be convenient for some readers to visit any of the shops, so for *Illustrated London News* readers, Hilditch & Key are offering a mail-order service on the three shirts in the photograph. They cost £49.95 each. Simply fill in the form below and send it off to: H&K/*ILN* Offer, Hilditch & Key, 87 Jermyn Street, London SW1. Alternatively, ring 01 930 4126 and, provided you mention the *ILN* offer and quote your credit card number, your order can be taken by phone.

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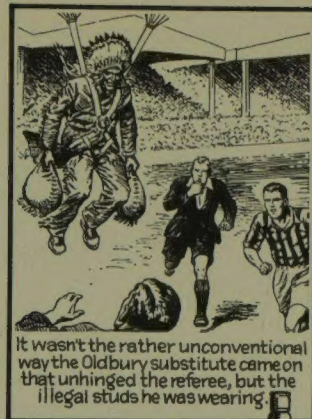
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Midnight train to Moscow

Donald Trelford's encounter with a dazzling Russian blonde

YOU COULD hardly miss her—a tall blonde with hair trailing down to the back of her knees, trousers tucked into high-heeled boots. She would stand out anywhere—but in the gloom at Leningrad Station she made a striking contrast with the middle-aged, grey-haired men with their little suitcases, waiting wearily, like me, for the midnight train to Moscow.

She was talking earnestly to a chap, but it was hard to gauge from the tenor of their conversation whether they were engaged in a tearful farewell, a lovers' tiff or a hastily negotiated pick-up. Before I could form a view about this, or even work out what language they were using, the lights in the train had come on and old women were standing like soldiers outside each door to collect our tickets.

"Number 10," said the babushka, pointing vaguely inside. I struggled with the Cyrillic script, sorted out what seemed to be the right compartment, and pulled back the door. There they stood—the blonde and the chap—talking as earnestly as ever, startled now by the interruption. I was surprised to see that, instead of the expected bunks, there were two single beds about 18 inches apart. Thinking I had stumbled into the wrong place, I made my excuses and left.

"Not 10," I said, showing the babushka my ticket. "Not 10? Yes, 10!" she replied firmly, and led me back down the corridor. She pulled open the door, banged on one of the beds and ordered: "You sleep here, now!" I meekly did as I was told, kicked off my shoes, hung up my jacket, lay on the bed and picked up my Kingsley Amis. Peeping out now and then from behind the book, I watched with some interest as the babushka tore into the couple in heated Russian.

After a while the blonde turned to me and, seeing me reading an English novel, addressed me haltingly in that tongue: "I'm sorry," she said. "This man, he is a Finn. I meet him two years ago on holiday in Soche. Tonight we meet by accident at Hotel Astoria in Leningrad; I am leaving, he is arriving. He insist he buy me champagne; he insist he bring me to station; he insist he travel with me to Moscow. But I tell him, 'impossible', he has no ticket, he has no visa. But he is a Finn, he is therefore drunk. I am sorry. This is the problem."

Before I could reply, the drunken Finn had turned on me suspiciously and started poking me in the ribs. "You," he said aggressively,



"you arrange this. She is your girl-friend. You sleep with her to Moscow!" "No, no, you've got the wrong end of the stick there, old chap," I said placatingly into his bleary, uncomprehending eyes.

By this time the compartment had started filling up, as various grades of railway official offered their advice. The raised voices had attracted a crowd of fellow-travellers outside, who stood around in their socks and braces wondering what was going on. They were grinning, and I suddenly saw how the situation looked to them: here was a beautiful Russian girl being fought over by two foreigners, one British, the other a Finn. Who was going to win?

Faces went sterner as the besotted and desperate Finn started scattering roubles around. Eventually the police arrived and the poor fellow was marched off up the platform, doubtless to some overcrowded gulag reserved for drunken Finns in Leningrad. Doors banged, whistles blew and there I was—stuck in the railway compartment alone with the blonde.

Gentlemanly, I asked if she'd like me to find another compartment. "Not necessary. They won't allow. This is usual in Soviet Union. Not

to worry. Nyet problem," she replied. We introduced ourselves. She turned out to be Olga, a 29-year-old divorced paediatrician from Moscow.

"What happens now?", I asked naïvely. "Soon they will bring us tea," she said. "When the tea is finished, the radio goes off, the lights go half off, you get undressed. When the lights go completely off, we go sleep." So: the tea came, the tea went, the radio went off, the lights went half off, and we started to undress. By this time the train was on the move through the white night and lurching round corners, so we kept bumping into each other and laughing. Gentlemanly again, I said I'd go and clean my teeth and undress in the bathroom while she got ready for bed.

As I came out of the bathroom, with my clothes and shoes clutched in my arms, all the lights on the train suddenly went out. I staggered along the corridor seeking number 10 in the darkness. I pulled open a door and fell in—right on top of a bald old Russian who scrambled awake and hurled me back into the corridor, my clothes scattered all over the place. I finally found what must now be known as "our" compartment, where she was rolling around with laughter at my antics along the corridor.

"I can just imagine the dilemma," said Clive James afterwards. "You lie there thinking: what if she's a KGB agent? The moment you go near she'll press a buzzer, the guards will come charging in, the lights blazing and cameras whirring. On the other hand, maybe she isn't... maybe it's your birthday."

"You didn't, of course," say my male friends sternly. "You wouldn't take such a risk. You wouldn't be such a fool." "I bet you did," say most of the women I know.

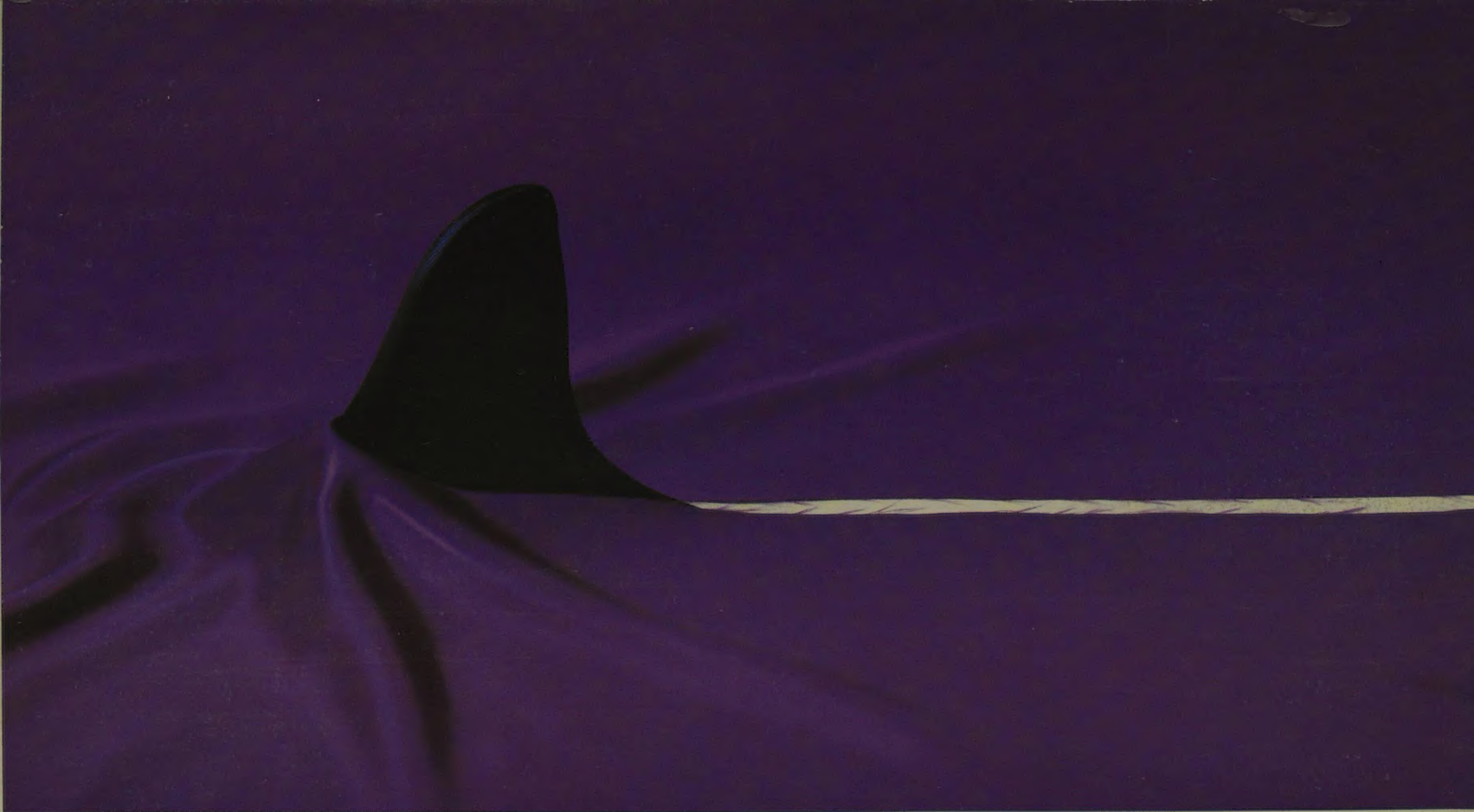
I was in the Soviet Union to help Garry Kasparov, the world chess champion, write his book. When I told him the story, he beseeched me: "Come on, Donald, you must tell. What happened?" Hating to disappoint either romantics or realists, I said what I say to all such inquiries: "It's like President Reagan over Irangate: I really can't remember. Besides, as my elder daughter put it so charmingly: 'Why should a beautiful intelligent Russian woman give you a second glance?'" ○

Donald Trelford is editor of *The Observer*. Child of Change by Garry Kasparov, with Donald Trelford, is published by Century Hutchinson



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